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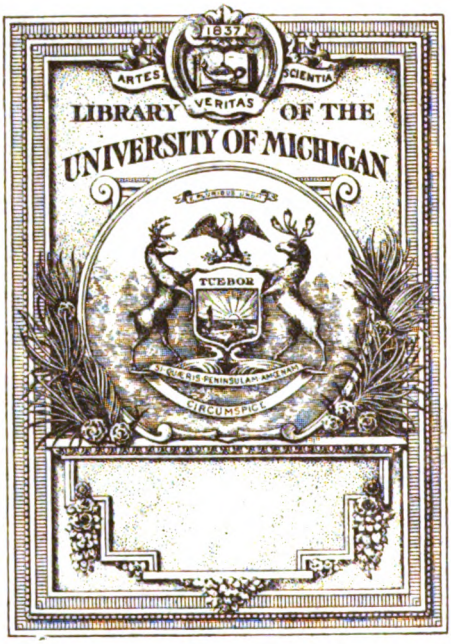
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THE

STRAND MAGAZINE

An Illustrated Monthly

Vol. LIV

JULY TO DECEMBER

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1917

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DETECTIVE STORY by "SAPPER"
OF THE TRENCHES

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FRY'S
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COCOA

See Page 22.

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"CAPTAIN LAVERING UTTERED A LITTLE CRY, RELAXED HIS GRIP, AND FELL SIDEWAYS."

(*See page* 13.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 54. JULY, 1917. No. 319.

The Other Side.

By F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

Illustrated by F. Stanley Davis.

A DEEP silence brooded over No. 3 Ward, Officers. It was late afternoon in October, but the room was as yet unillumined from within. The two long lines of windows that confronted one another—the ward was a temporary hut-building—did so in a contrast of lights, the eastern windows, backed by grey obscurity, reflecting broken beams of the glory of gold and purple and fiery red that streamed in from the west. The two lines of beds, the indistinct greys and whites of the ward, were delicately touched by the warm glow where they rose into its radiance. It picked out the short curves of the turned-back sheet, humped with the recumbent form beneath, in an imponderable caress upon the broken humanity that lay, desperately finite, under the splendour that knows no final setting. A mingled odour of disinfectant and anæsthetic hung in the air, explanatory of the dead quiet, of the heavy breathing that was part of the silence. This was a ward of the severely wounded, recently arrived. From the utmost climax of human effort, thunderous to the ear, dreadful to the eye, maddening to the soul, whether it exulted triumphant over the menace of instant extinction or shrank appalled and paralyzed in the horror of brutal death, from the fierce superiority of the unscathed killer, from the sudden shock, these men had come, many of them unconsciously, by train and ship and train and car, to the white-and-green hospital on the empty moorland, to the hushed, screened peace of the bed-ranked ward.

At the farther end of the ward a Medical Officer stood in murmured conversation with a Sister. He was outlined black against the radiance of the sunset, but on her the glow fell fully illuminant, rosy upon the starched whiteness of the coif and apron, touching the pale face into faint colour. Her large, serious eyes rested upon him, attentive to his instructions, glanced away to the patient in the end bed as he spoke.

"Number Ten must be very carefully watched, Sister," he said, the little smile upon his face, indicative only of his confidence in the quiet young woman before him, in no way minimizing the gravity of his words. "I am afraid we are going to have a very hard fight for him. But we mustn't let him slip through our fingers. We'll keep him on this side if we can."

She assented with a nod of the head and a long, deep breath that was clearly a sigh. He scrutinized her sharply.

"You have something on your mind, Sister. No bad news, I hope?" His voice was very kind. "Captain Hershaw is all right?" The Sister's engagement was generally known in the hospital.

The large eyes opened, revealing a mute, long-suffered anxiety.

"It is more than a week since I heard from him, doctor. I am afraid—horribly afraid," she said, in a low voice. "This terrible fighting!"

"The post is sometimes held up during

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active operations, Sister. You must not be prematurely anxious. A week is not very long. You must believe in his luck. He has had a charmed life so far." The M.O.'s kindly smile emphasized his reassuring tone.

"He has—he has. And life always seems so—so vivid in him. I cannot imagine him"—her voice sank almost to inaudibility—"dead."

"Don't!" He smiled, full of sympathy. "Believe in his star." His tone changed to the professional. "Would you like to go off duty, Sister? I will speak to the matron. A car is going into town. Go and look at the shops."

"No—no, doctor, thank you very much. I won't leave my dear boys here. Poor lads! it does me good to fight for them—almost as if——" She stopped, turned away.

"Very well, Sister. Send for me if any change occurs in Number Ten."

The M.O. walked down the ward, throwing little glances at the silent patients, and departed.

For some little time the Sister busied herself noiselessly. Then Number Ten stirred uneasily in his bed.

"Sister!" he called, in a faint voice.

She was by his side in an instant.

"A drink, please!"

She gave it to him, looked down on the young, strongly-masculine features as he drank, with an interest that was subtly, unconsciously, more than professional. From the moment of his arrival in the ward—even in his silences—Number Ten had been a personality. Though powerless in bed, there was a curious hint of brute force in him.

"Now you must go to sleep again, Captain Lavering," she said, smoothing his pillow.

"I can't, Sister." His eyes closed and opened again in a spasm of pain. "I—I want to feel someone near me"—his voice was very weak—"to get hold of life again. Sister—sit beside me—for a moment, please."

She glanced at him irresolutely, smoothed the hair from his hot forehead with a cool hand, and then acceded to his request, seated herself on the chair by the bed.

"But you mustn't talk," she warned him.

"I won't, Sister." He was quiet for a moment. "Sister, I'm very bad, I know—but I'm not going to die! I won't die—I won't let myself die!" Despite his weakness, there was intense will-power in his tone.

"Hush, hush! Of course you are not going to die." Involuntarily she laid her hand upon the bed, as if to transfuse some of her own life-force into him.

He reached out a hand, grasped hers, resisted her attempt at withdrawal.

"Please—please!" he murmured. "I want to hold on to life—there's so much——" His eyes closed sleepily. "I feel life flowing into me," he said. The grip upon her hand was tight.

For a long time she sat thus, her hand clasped in his. Number Ten slept, with heavy breathing. It seemed to her that his fever diminished. She feared to withdraw herself lest she should awaken him. The long ward was deathly still.

Presently there was a noise of footsteps. An orderly approached, changing his gait to a clumsy tip-toe in obedience to her gesture.

"A telegram for you, Sister," he said.

She glanced at the patient, essayed to release her hand. It was firmly held in the sleeper's grasp.

"Open the telegram, Thomson," she said, in a whisper.

The orderly obeyed, handed her the drab piece of paper.

She took it, glanced at it, nodded a speechless dismissal to the orderly.

"*The War Office reports that Ronald is missing; believed killed.*—HERSHAW."

The words branded themselves into her brain as she sat there fixed, immobile. She could hear them in the wailing cry of the widowed mother who had written the telegram, but her own voice seemed to her for ever dumb, never to break this crushing silence. She stared—with dry eyes—straight before her. The obsequial lights of the departed sun, framed by the window opposite, were extinguished one after another. She did not stir, was unconscious that her hand was still in the grasp of the wounded man. "*The War Office reports*" . . . It was like staring at a high closed door.

An immeasurable time passed before an orderly entered, switched on the electric light, drew the blinds. She roused herself, found the grip upon her hand relaxed. She rose; with tight lips and burning eyes, went about her duties.

That evening it was by an effort of will, sternly administered, that she sat at table in the Sisters' mess-room. She scarcely ate, was deaf to the feminine chatter around her. One of the Sisters, a notorious flirt, joked her upon her lover-like posture with Number Ten. The orderly had evidently talked. Sister Braithwaite did not reply. As soon as

"'OPEN THE TELEGRAM, THOMSON,' SHE SAID, IN A WHISPER.'

possible she fled to her little, match-boarded cubicle. By her bedside was a photograph of a clean-featured young man, with intellectual eyes, more than ordinarily vivid in their expression. She kissed it passionately. "Ronald! Ronald!"—the loved name came from the depths of her. The merciful tears fell fast, her bosom heaved.

She slept with a packet of letters pressed tightly to her warm body.

She heard her name called: "Mary! Mary!" in a startlingly familiar voice. She heard herself reply: "Ronald!" It was very dark. Where was she? Ah, by the stream! It seemed queerly natural that she should be by that stream. It was not so dark after all—only twilight. Twilight, with dark woods coming down to the stream. Her name was called again, "Mary! Mary!" her lover's voice, impatient. Again she heard herself reply: "Ronald! Where are you?" "Here, dear! On the other side! You must cross the stream."

Of course! She must cross the stream—that was quite natural—and there was a little footbridge, offering passage. She went over, not daring to look down. On the other side she waited. He was not yet visible. She wondered what suit he would be wearing, wondered why she wondered. He came towards her, his clothes curiously more conspicuous than his face. He was clad in his old tweed suit, and mysteriously it seemed odd to her. Yet what else should he be wearing? It was the suit he always wore when out for a walk. She glanced at her own clothes with a subtle sense of strangeness, yet it was her old summer frock she wore. This little puzzle about clothes played itself out in cosmic depths of her, receded or was solved, vanished. Her lover was standing at her side, enfolded her.

"Mary! I have been so anxious about you!"

She looked up to eyes that seemed like stars in the twilight.

"I, too, Ronald—I have been worrying about you." There was a sense of something terrible in the background, imminent, and yet she felt it had been with her for a long time. It ceased suddenly. "But everything's all right now—I have found you."

A little glimmering of something in the depths of her asked why she said that, seemed to repeat doubtfully: "found you" in a long, eternally re-echoing voice. She felt eerie. It was as though her existence was a duplicate imperfectly combined, like the double vision, half running into each other, of badly-adjusted binoculars.

"I am so glad you are safe, dear," she heard herself say.

"Let us go and hear the nightingales," he said, in the voice so ringingly his own. He drew her along the path in the twilight, his arm about her waist.

Nightingales? Now? Of course! Why not? The season was early June—what was the silly half-thought submerged beyond the horizon of her mind?

She allowed herself to be impelled by the pressure of his arm. Closely linked, they followed the tenebrous path by the wood, climbed skirting its dark edge. Her lover talked copiously and interestingly as he always did, on a multitude of subjects. He was humorous, satirical, rhapsodic, earnestly eloquent, by turns. How like him it was! She admired the wide range of his mind. Much more easily than usual—she realized it in a little glow of self-flattery—she comprehended him all through a long and intricate disquisition. Yet lurking somewhere in her dream-consciousness was the feeling that there was an all-important topic on which he did not touch. A part of her tried to identify that topic, and failed. The failure worried her. He talked of travel, of a trip into Germany through the Black Forest, across Lake Constance into Austria and Tyrol. Of course! That was to be their honeymoon tour. In the days before—before what?—before something—they had often talked about it. They were not even officially engaged then—she remembered how they used to laugh together over these distant projects that were treated as imminent facts. They had even had a little quarrel over the choice of two alternative stopping-places.... She came back to his voice.

"Listen!" he said. "Listen!"

A nightingale was singing with supernatural power. Loud, thrillingly resonant under the stars that now powdered the sky, the song welled out to them. Its burden, mysteriously comprehended by them to esoteric depths, was sorrow—the sorrow of all the world, here completely expressed, transmuted into so strange a beauty that the listener held his breath. The deep sobs, shudderingly repeated, that threw off the magic runs of crystal sound, pervaded the atmosphere about them with a mystic spell, evoked an immense pity in them. They could have wept. Suddenly they were conscious of a perfidy in this magically-induced compassion—a danger common to both, implied in it, imminent. He flung his arms about her to protect her, shielding her from it.

"You are mine, dearest!—mine!—only mine!"

His words went ringing through the stars, passed out of hearing, but were not silenced. She felt kisses of intense fervour upon her mouth—responded.

" I am ! " she cried. Her words also rolled away endlessly, as though permuted into imperishable brass. " I am yours alone ! "

She half-woke in the feeling of a near presence, then sank again into a sleep that remembers not its dreams.

She awoke in the morning obsessed by the baffling sense of an occurrence she could not recall. Then the memory, the realization of her loss flooded in on her—harshly predominant in those first empty moments as yet unlinked to the distractions of the day. She wept, uncontrollable tears. " Ronald ! Ronald ! " she cried, in a low voice, her face buried in the soft pillow. Then she remembered. Her tears were checked. The details of her dream, opened one by one, stirred in her a curious, subtle fear she felt unworthy of her. The vividness of it awoke an atavistic emotion, the shrinking reaction of primitive humanity from the influence of those dead to this world. Yet a more recent growth in her tried to glory in the contact—impelled by an obscure sentiment of duty. " I do love you, Ronald ! " she murmured again to the pillow. " I am yours alone ! " The saying of the words seemed to merge her dream-life into unison with the actual.

There was much to do in the long, freshly-aerated ward that morning. As one by one each bed had its sheets turned back, exposing the gashed, perforated, or fractured bodies of men who winced with pain, the crude other side of war was laid bare. Into strong relief, too, was thrown the complementary phase of the other side of the vast catastrophe where the noblest are proudly conscious of the wounds they inflict. With tender care, the utmost solicitude not to cause one unnecessary pang of suffering, the khaki-clad doctors, the grey-uniformed, white-coifed and aproned nurses, laboured to save and heal.

Sister Braithwaite thrust herself utterly into her daily task of dressing wounds, of soothing pain, of bringing a cheerful smile on to the face of the sufferer. So doing, she eluded for quite long periods the obsession which haunted her.

Number Ten was once more the focus of interest in the ward. His condition had grown worse during the night. To-day he was in a dangerous fever. The doctor was grave. Sister Braithwaite watched over him with unremitting care, found herself passionately fighting off death. In the early afternoon the crisis passed. He woke from a quiet sleep, looked up to the Sister standing by his bed.

" You have saved me, Sister," he said, in a weak voice. " I could feel it——"

" Hush, Captain Lavering. Go to sleep. We are all trying to get you well."

" It was you," he said, faintly, as his eyes closed once more.

The silence of the ward was suddenly broken by a merry peal of bells floating in through the open windows. In the little village church, tucked away in a near-by hollow of the moor, a wedding was being solemnized. Sudden tears, a strange emotion, surged up in Sister Braithwaite.

A case that had made good progress was removed from the ward, a newly-arrived, severely wounded man brought in.

" If only it were Ronald ! " The neat, prim figure of the Sister, supervising the orderlies busy lifting the casualty into the bed, gave no indication of the desperate agonized prayer.

She dreamed.

" Mine at last, my beloved—really mine ! " The familiar voice thrilled through her, very close, over her head.

" Yours ! Always yours ! " she heard herself murmur.

She took her head from the darkness that obscured her vision—it was his coat against which she had been nestling; she saw the little white touzled-up hairs of the rough tweed ere her gaze stretched to a longer focus. She looked to his face, met his vivid eyes—looked round at her surroundings.

They were alone in the first-class compartment of a railway train that rocked and roared. His lips were pressed on hers. " The great day, dearest ! " he said. Her mind leaped to the allusion. Their wedding-day ! They had been married that morning—she could hear still the joyous peal of bells—were going away on their honeymoon. The tweed suit he wore was quite new—something like the old. She was in a travelling-dress that he had already admired. Of course ! It all came back to her as if she had just awakened from a little sleep.

The train rushed on. She lived through all the cinematograph-like pictures of the journey. A halt and descent—little anxieties about the luggage—then, after an interlude which was vague, another train, another long journey—all was a continuous long experience. She thrilled at a surreptitious squeeze of his hand—ah, yes, there were other people in the carriage now—rounded her lips at him in a provoking similitude of a kiss, daringly profiting by the inattention of their fellow-

travellers. A yearning for him—induced by the naughty little act—filled her breast, persisted. There was bustle, confusion. They were in a throng of travellers who hurried. Hurry! They must not lose the boat! It lay there before them, only its upper works seen, its two great funnels leaning backward, belching black smoke. The black smoke spread over the sky. It was night. They were on board the boat, cradled in an easy motion, sensible of the throb of the engines. On and on they journeyed, linked in a very close communion of eyes that spoke, of hands that squeezed each other. She tasted a thousand little kindnesses. How good he was! How loving!

And still the journey went on. Yet more trains. She must have slept. She woke to a great city filled with innumerable inhabitants, all very busy. They spoke a strange language very rapidly to one another. She could not understand a word. But he, Ronald, understood—conversed with them in their foreign tongue. How clever he was! There was music somewhere—from a lighted *café* that flooded a damp street with radiance.

She was bewildered in a variety of new and strange impressions, leaned on him, soul and body. He led her, sure of himself. Her love for him seemed to increase at this revelation of his unfailing self-reliance. Yet she knew that she loved him with all her being, had always loved him so.

"And how do you like Brussels, dearest?" his ringing voice asked. Brussels? Of course! As though a veil had fallen from her eyes she saw that they were in the middle of the Grand' Place, lights playing, Rembrandtesque, on the carved stone-work of the ancient buildings. She recognized it at once—how accurate the picture postcards had been! Brussels—the honeymoon journey! She thrilled with happiness, leaning on his strong arm.

The dream continued. . . .

All through the next day its vividness haunted her. At times she had to will herself to live in the actual world. She scarcely spoke. The Medical Officer in charge of her ward stopped her, asked her if she were all right, his eyes searching her face. He sympathized with her on her loss so kindly and gently that she loved him for it.

Number Ten was still the great preoccupation. He claimed incessant care. But he was in the faint beginnings of a good progress. Strangely, it seemed that when she tended him there was a conflict in some obscure part of her. There seemed to be an inarticulate voice, immensely remote, vaguely minatory, not explicit. Captain Lavering insisted that she was his rescuer, his eyes more eloquent than his words. It made her feel awkward, curiously shame-faced. His reiteration threw her out of that smile-armoured impersonal professional relation to the patient, which alone makes continuous hospital work possible. She masked her face with a gentle severity. When he slept she was unreasonably glad. But she liked tending him. The contact with actual life, pain-stricken though it was, obliterated to some extent the haunting memory of that dream-world from which she shrank, vaguely frightened.

She forced herself to live only in the long, quiet, bright ward; in the chattering society of the Sisters' mess-room when off duty.

Her dream linked itself on to its predecessor. The honeymoon was finished. She looked back down a long vista of travel, of happy days. She had really lived through all those experiences. She picked them one by one from her memory like rare pieces from a jewel-case, contemplated them with a smile. Each expanded into a picture. The day they had walked together down the rugged path of the tiny valley imprisoned in the wooded hills, a fierce little stream outpacing them as it dashed against great boulders, and had come upon a sunny meadow where children garlanded with flowers laughed and danced in a ring; a wonderful blue lake on whose shores were yellow houses with red roofs and ancient cypresses on a greensward near the water's edge—the melancholy reiterated note of a church bell beat like a pulse through the scene; an old, old town with gabled houses leaning in close confidence, rich carvings—the grotesque; in all was a pervading peace, rich quiet life that thrives sleepy with well-being from year to year; over all was the ecstasy of mutual love through which they had beheld the world.

Another memory came to her—early morning in the Alps, a sea of wild narcissi all about them, and, beyond, the great white peaks glittering in the sun of a blue sky. They went on and on, up and up. The flowers were left behind—and she remembered she had regretted leaving them, had grudged the effort to climb for the sake of climbing—but he had insisted. They stood at last high up, dazzlingly white snowfields stretching away on every side, a summer sun beating hot upon them. The air was rarefied, induced in them

a subtle ecstasy as they stood marvelling at the brilliant austere beauty of the great peaks lifting themselves into the sky, their robes slipping from their rocky shoulders in a miracle of purity. He encircled her waist with his arm, spoke in the voice that stirred mysterious depths in her.

"Dearest," he said. "Not a flower, but snow, is the true emblem of love. White as the essential soul, how soon on the lower levels it is defiled, disappears! But on the heights it endures stainless for ever, no matter how hot the kiss of the sun."

And she had kissed him, speechlessly.

But all this was past. She was at home now, waiting for him to come back from his work. Their home, the home they had always planned, was all around her. The very pieces of furniture they had regarded in shop windows with longing eyes, had calculated the cost of, were there. That quaint table in the centre of the room, half-covered with the embroidered open-work white linen laid for tea—how covetously they had once looked on it! How depressed they had been at the dealer's price! But it was there, after all. Ronald had bought it, he who never rested until he attained his heart's desire. How purposeful he was! How strong! How loving-kind! She closed her eyes, leaned back in a swimming ecstasy of love.

There he was! She heard his footstep at the other side of the door. He entered, was radiant, enfolded her in that wonderful embrace where she was a surrendered thing. He had a little parcel, handed it to her. Tremblingly she opened it, certain of delight. It was a framed enlargement of a photograph they had taken that morning in the high Alps. With a little happy cry she gazed once more on the long smooth slopes of snow, stretching up to the dark-patched peaks. Once more his arm encircled her, his deep voice spoke.

"So shall we live, darling, always—ever upon the heights!"

She lay awake in her bed, ere it was day, and understood in a great tremulous awe. In her dreams she and Ronald were living precisely the life they would have lived had there been no war. The honeymoon—their home—all would have been accomplished ere this. Had there been no war! Exactly as she had dreamed they would have travelled together—his arm would have enfolded her—in a long, long happiness they would have lived. She burst into a passion of tears, stifled in the pillows. Then she turned her head, wondering, feeling as if her heart had stopped. Would this dream continue? Was it—in some mysterious way—*real?* Her lips moved in a prayer, but she scarcely knew what she prayed.

She was glad to escape into the busy actual life of the ward, into the cold light of day.

From now onwards her life definitely assumed this double phase.

In the hospital she was the Sister Braithwaite that all had known, diligent, bravely smiling, conscientious in her duty. Those about her remarked only that there was sometimes a curious stillness in her mien, spoke pityingly among themselves of the sad loss of her soldier lover. But death in a hospital is no unfamiliar catastrophe, and none lingered on the topic. There was much to do, a continual stream of new arrivals from the distant conflict, the doubtful fate of many of those already long suffering. There were deaths, recoveries, operations of professional interest.

Number Ten went slowly but steadily towards health. Sister Braithwaite deliberately avoided all contact with him save the professional. When she chatted with a patient in the ward it was not with him. His gaze was reproachful, and she would not see it. Sometimes when she approached him he would, half-jokingly, reiterate that she had saved him. She would not hear. A strange sense of insecurity disturbed her in his presence. She half-divined that he nursed a project. She fled the glance of the steady, resolute eyes in the strong face. When at last he had made such progress that he could be removed to a convalescent ward she was glad at his departure.

At night she passed into another world. There was no war in that life—never had been war. From dream to dream she lived through a continuous existence—the wife of Ronald. It was all vividly real. It was the life they would have led—it played itself out now in what to her day-time consciousness was a realm of shadows. Not always did she dream, or rather not always did her consciousness register the events through which she passed. But later dreams had dream-memories in them, and the record had no gaps. Time passed in that dream-world without relation to the terrestrial days. In one night she frequently lived through long periods. He was always kind to her, always loving. She, too, loved him passionately, with all her soul.

But in the daytime her being shrank from

that shadow-life. She was afraid—mysteriously, primitively afraid. She could not mourn as she would have liked to mourn. Sometimes she asked herself whether she was not ceasing to love her dead affianced. She tried to evoke his image—and often, to her distress, succeeded not. The strongly-masculine features of Number Ten, Captain Lavering, rose before her mental vision, would not be banished. Then she despised herself bitterly. In remorse, she willed herself forward to the night, bade herself not shrink, and when the hour came gave herself to the darkness tremulously, like a slave of the harem who goes into the chamber of her lord. The portal passed she was happy, completely happy—as happy as she would have been the wife of Ronald in the dainty little home that never could be other than the home of her dreams.

With strange, almost terrifying, completeness the shadow-life evolved. The house she lived in she knew in all its details, had its rooms that she preferred, views from its windows that she loved or veiled. The presence of her husband was a reality that filled it. She knew his footstep, heard his voice. (It rang often in her ears when her eyes unclosed in the little matchboarded cubicle suddenly unfamiliar.) They had long, long conversations together—wonderful little interludes where their always underlying love blossomed into delicate flower. She saw his face clearly, saw that it was changing slightly, growing more set, less boyish. There were difficulties—the difficulties of real life—to be encountered. An anguished struggle with bills and finances that would not meet wrung her soul all one night. She pledged herself to such brave economies! But the difficulties were overcome, the memory of them lost in the embrace of her lover. Rarely, rarely was she unhappy until she woke.

And day by day, not keeping pace with her other life, her life of work in the hospital went on. Week linked into week, month into month. The great open moors around changed their hue, were often shrouded in mist. In December the first frosts glassed the pools. Many were the patients who had come and gone. The little cemetery under the hill was fuller. Other sufferers were more fortunate. Captain Lavering was fully convalescent, nearing his discharge. She saw him often at a distance, avoided him when he tried to approach her. She could not have explained why, even to herself. Yet, somewhere, deep down in her, the virility of his aspect set a chord vibrating. She was always extremely, almost painfully, conscious of his propinquity. For many weeks they had not exchanged a word.

There came a night wonderful above all others. She thrilled with a strange new ecstasy, drawn from deep springs. It was the quiet, speechless ecstasy of some mysterious fulfilment. She was filled with a great tenderness that welled up and overflowed like a source. There was something warm against her heart. She looked down and saw that it was a new-born babe. She was in bed. Then, in a great surge of deeply-flowing joy, she understood. She was a mother—the mother of Ronald's child! She could have cried for joy that lacked expression. Her fingers stroked thin silky hair on a tiny head.

Suddenly she was aware that Ronald was looking down on her. She yearned up to him, but as she did so she was conscious that her allegiance was divided. Not all of her, as heretofore, reached out to him, undividedly his. There was a dumb insistent claim at her breast. She smiled to disguise it.

But it seemed that he understood. His face was troubled, the vivid eyes reproachful. He leaned over her.

"Dearest," he said. "I cannot share you. The child must never be more than the symbol of our love. You must be mine—always mine. Promise me that you will be always mine alone!"

His jealousy flattered her. A gush of affection for the strong lover admitting her power, mingled with the mother-craving for protection for self and child, was a fresh impulse revivifying the old allegiance.

"Always yours, dearest—always yours!"

He looked at her searchingly, his head seeming like a carven figure of destiny, strangely significant.

"I could annihilate the thing that comes between us," he said, and she was a little frightened at his voice. It rolled away big, superhuman—she harked back, in a flitting thought, to an earlier dream-memory.

He turned to a picture on the wall, pointed to it. It was the Alpine scene.

"You and I," he said, "always together—alone upon the heights."

"Yes! Yes!" she said, only half understanding. "Always—always yours!"

She woke with a start, her own voice ringing in her ears. Night was still a blackness in the little cubicle. She put out her hand, touched the matchboard wall to assure herself of her surroundings.

When she woke again it was to look through

"AT NIGHT SHE PASSED INTO ANOTHER WORLD."

the window and see the world white with snow. She remembered with some pleasure that she was off duty, had the day to herself. She wanted to be alone. Her head was a whirl of troubled thoughts. The emotions of the dream were still in her blood. Her arms felt vacant, as though an infant had just been taken from them. A new longing came up in her—a craving for motherhood. She linked it to her dead lover. "Oh, Ronald!" she murmured. "If only we had been married before you went to the war——" She left the thought unfinished. The craving persisted, apart from his memory. She ached for a real, living affection in this world of men and women. Strange thoughts haunted her while she dressed.

As soon as possible she escaped from the hospital, went out upon the moor that stretched in suave contours of dazzling white. A pale blue sky sank into its mists. A cold wind hurried over it, whirling up little columns of dusty frozen snow. She walked far into its solitudes, she hardly knew whether to escape from her thoughts or to be alone with them.

At last she turned back. She had climbed out of a little hollow, was descending a featureless slope when suddenly she perceived the figure of a man, dark against the snow. He walked towards her quickly. Simultaneous with her recognition of him was the flush of blood to her face, a peculiar nervous thrill. It was Captain Lavering. She half hesitated. Then she strode forward, an insidiously victorious temptation masquerading as strong will. Why should she not pass him? It was absurd. He might think—— She hoped that she was not blushing, or that the keen wind which fluttered her veil would be the self-evident excuse.

They met. He stopped, made a gesture of salute.

"Good morning, Captain Lavering." She was glad to hear her own voice, had been afraid that she could not bring it to utterance. What was there so troubling about this man? She avoided his eyes. "I'm pleased to see you walking about again." The crisis was successfully surmounted. She made as if to continue her way.

"I saw you in the distance, Sister," he said, bluntly.

She did not find the commonplace remark for which she sought. He blocked her pathway.

"I have been wanting to speak to you for a long time, Sister," he said, as though he knew there was no necessity for the trite beginning. "Ever since you saved my life. You did—we won't discuss that." She stared at him, speechless. "But I have waited until I was sure that I was quite well again. You know what I am going to say. For a long time you have felt what was in my mind. You must be my wife."

He was strong and real—vividly actual. She felt as she did sometimes when her eyes opened from a dream into the solid surroundings of her cubicle. He barred off the other world.

"No—no," she breathed, dodged past him, hurried over the snow.

He was by her side, keeping pace easily with her.

"You can't escape me like that," he said. There was obvious brute masculinity in his tone. Though she tried to resent it, it did not displease her, and she was angry with herself that it did not. "Listen. I am a plain man. There is no fancy romance about me. I don't want illusions. But, I love you." He stated the fact with absolute decision. "I can offer you a good position and all that, but I know that does not affect the matter. The vital thing is that from the moment we set eyes on each other something happened——" For the first time he faltered in his tone. "We both knew it. There it is. I hate being sentimental. But I want you—and I know that you want me."

"No—no!" she said again, almost running. A blind desire to escape, from herself as much as from him, dominated her. "I—I can't."

"Can't? Why not? You are free. I know you were engaged. But he is—gone. We live in a real world of flesh and blood. You can't exist on a memory. Besides," the words came like a slave-driver's whip—she almost obeyed it, "you never loved him as you love me!"

She revolted, stung to burning resentment against herself equally as against this masterful, crude male. She stopped and faced him.

"Captain Lavering, you talk like a sick man." She triumphed in the steadiness of her words. "You have insulted me in the most uncalled-for manner. Let that be enough."

His eyes looked into hers, challenged her sincerity, were assured of it. He went red, looked awkward.

"Forgive me," he mumbled.

She went on without a word, ignored the fact that he accompanied her. They breasted an upward smooth slope of snow that stretched

up to a crisp outline against the blue sky. He ventured a sidelong glance at her, a little light of primitive cunning in his eyes.

" Quite Alpine, isn't it ? " he said.

As intended—his tone implied a resumption of ordinary commonplace relationship—the words took her off her guard. But he was ignorant of their esoteric significance. In a flash, in a deep convulsion of the soul, she saw the Alpine picture, vivid with symbolism, of her other life " On the heights ! " In the full poignancy of the emotion it unlocked—her own vow of fidelity ringing in her ears from another world—she found herself struggling in a man's tight grasp, hot breath upon her face, lips seeking her own. " You must ! You shall ! " he muttered, straining forward to her. She stiffened, fought in a frenzy. " Ronald ! Ronald ! " she cried.

An icy wind swept down the slope, smote upon them like a breath from the grave, shudderingly cold. Captain Lavering uttered a little cry, relaxed his grip, and fell sideways upon the snow.

Sister Braithwaite stared at him in horror. A great fear came upon her, an awe in the presence of unearthly power. *She knew !* Her soul slipped back into its dream-state, confronted the visage of her lover, stern as destiny. The eyes judged her, forgave. Then, weeping hysterically, she ran towards the hospital. It was not far distant.

They brought in the dead man.

" H'm," said the Medical Officer, looking at him. " Cerebral hæmorrhage. This intense cold—— I was always rather afraid of a lesion. A nasty shock for you, Sister. Well, well, another one finished—very sad, very sad."

An orderly brought Sister Braithwaite her share of the just-arrived post. There was a letter from Ronald's mother. It enclosed one from the War Office.

" Dear Madam," it ran. " It is regretted that no further details have come to hand regarding your son. Officially, he is still posted as ' missing, believed killed.' "

Sister Braithwaite shut herself in her cubicle, talked to the photograph with the vivid eyes, talked to it as 'primitive woman talks to the lover who has destroyed his rival. She reached out to the Other Side.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The next instalment of Sir A. Conan Doyle's "British Campaign in France" is postponed for the present, as the military authorities consider that the narrative is drawing too close to the present situation, and that "The Facts at Last !—The Inside Story of the War," which it has been the unique character of this History to convey, might prove to the advantage of the enemy. The interval, we hope, will only be a short one, and the History will re-commence with "The Battle of the Somme."

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Every reader of this Magazine will be interested to hear that Sherlock Holmes will make his reappearance in an early number in a story which describes how he

Outwits a German Spy!

"NURSEMAIDS WITH PRAMS WATCHED THE YOUNG HEROES BEING RAPIDLY TRANSFORMED INTO SOMETHING WITH WHICH IT IS A RAPTURE TO WALK OUT."

A Way They (Sometimes) Have in the Army. ACCORDING TO MARIA.

By MRS. JOHN LANE.

Illustrated by H. M. Bateman.

I FOUND Maria as nearly in tears as she ever ventured to be, for even in her greatest anguish she always remembers that they make her nose so red.

"Potter," Maria wailed, "Potter told me this very morning that Government needs her. She said so as soon as I told her she left too much plate-powder in her silver; which is true," she added, gloomily, "but I wish I hadn't said it till after the war. Now she says she's going to drive a van in a uniform, and where ever I shall get another parlourmaid gracious only knows." And Maria gave herself up to despair.

However, Maria's agony was premature, for the next time I met her she called out, "Potter's going to stay!" long before I got anywhere near her. "She says she wouldn't leave me for worlds." And she seemed deeply moved by Potter's tribute. "So I shall, of course, raise her wages, and say nothing more about the plate-powder till we're at peace." By which I observed that Maria had learnt wisdom.

It was not until I called again on Maria that I discovered the unconscious instrument by which mercy had been vouchsafed to her. Government had turned the park opposite her terrace into a camp, with khaki and huts complete, and khaki was drilling, drilling, *and* drilling, and N.C.O.'s were cussing, cussing, *and* cussing for all they were worth, and the glory of their country. And in the dim park distances young amateur

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cooks in khaki could be seen giving first aid to potatoes and other vegetables.

As for the park railings, they had all they could do to keep straight under the heavy weight of nursemaids with prams who watched the young heroes being rapidly transformed into something with which it is a rapture to walk out. In fact, for the first time in history babies in prams were at a premium, for they were the only valid excuse for lingering there by the hour. Indeed, Romance so held these young persons in her clutch that they were quite deaf to the wails of the prams, or at most only abstracted their gaze long enough to cork up the anguish of infancy with a "comforter."

Over the way the serving young ladies in the terrace spent most of their time either hanging out of the upper front windows or they were for ever shaking the rugs on the balconies. The ladies of the terrace, hitherto united by common suffering, discovered that their situations, once avoided, were now filled with miraculous ease. In fact, the young serving ladies who applied for them now cooed in their turn, and the voice of the turtle-dove was heard in the terrace basements as never before, and it never complained.

"KHAKI PATROLLED THE SIDE-WALK AND WINKED GENIALLY AT HER."

Maria basked in Potter's wintry and non-committal smile, and even gave her two-and-six to cement her allegiance.

Then, just when she didn't expect it, a thunderbolt, of course, swooped down from the blue, for Potter announced that she had an old aunty who was very bad, and therefore a month's notice, please. Maria nearly collapsed. She'd never dreamed of an old aunty, although as a relative an old aunt may be said to be the least dangerous.

However, Potter, not unmoved by Maria's agony, offered to stay if she might have as many evenings off a week as she needed to minister to her suffering relative. So Maria revived and raised her wages again. It must be confessed that Potter's aunty proved to be a very inconsiderate invalid. She required nursing at the most awkward time—right after dinner—and kept Potter uncommonly late in her nursing uriform, which consisted mostly of a new hat, a new feather boa, and a string of the best wax beads. On the isolated evenings when Potter remained in she relaxed from the severe strain of nursing by taking the air on the upper area step—in time of peace one of the seven deadly sins. Still, although khaki patrolled the side-walk and winked genially at her, Potter looked virtuously away, unmoved by their admitted fascinations.

So it was possibly in the nature of a thank-offering for so much mercy that Maria invited me to dinner—war dinner, the kind that leaves one with an aching void inside into which one is glad enough later to introduce even a cold water-biscuit.

After dinner we left Samuel in the dining-room with his pipe and the political situation, and retired to the morning-room, where a gas fire invites to soul-to-soul talks, after which it can be turned off.

Potter was out ministering to her aunty, who, Maria complained not without reason, refused either to live or to die. When questioned Potter remarked, with stony propriety, that she really couldn't kill her even to please madam. To which Maria, of course, agreed, for she is nothing if not just.

Now the only thing that lives and has its being in the morning-room is Maria's telephone, and no sooner had we settled ourselves down before the gas fire than it gave a tumultuous peal. Maria said I wasn't to go, for it was sure to be Mrs. Dill-Binkie about the new War

Work Guild, to which only the super-select are eligible.

"They've asked me," she announced, in a lofty way, and put on her company smile from sheer force of habit, as if Mrs. Dill-Binkie could see her as she raised the receiver.

Now the room was so small and I was so near that I couldn't help hearing, for it might have been the Bull of Bashan telephoning, he roared so.

"I s'y, is Miss Potter in?"

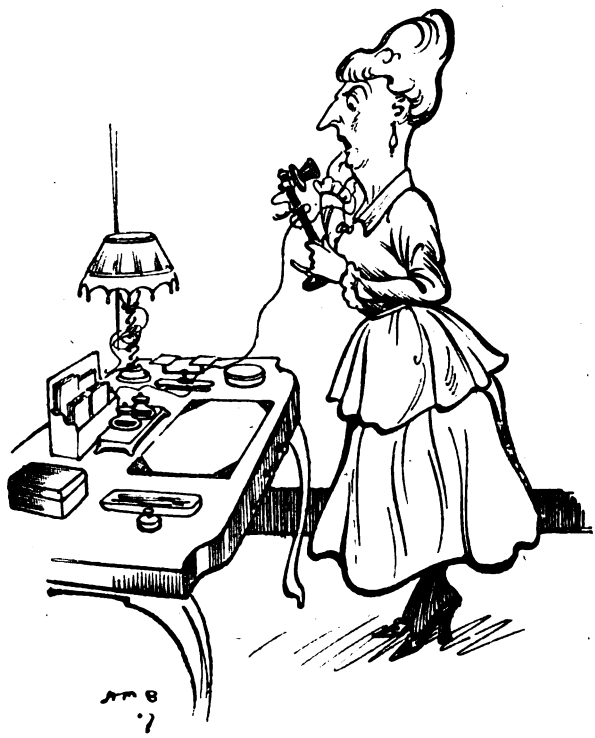
"Miss—Miss Potter! What?" Maria gasped, then collected herself. "She's out," she 'phoned, haughtily.

"The wicked little dear, to deceive her own tootsy-wootsy! Tellin' me she'd be all alone, and I to come an' 'ave a 'igh ole time, wot with beer an' fags. I s'y, are you cookie?"

Maria's spine turned visibly into a ramrod. "I'm not the cook!" she vibrated, shrilly.

"Then you're the ducky 'ousemaid," and the roar seemed satisfied with its own explanation. "Do excuse me, miss, I didn't some'ow recognize your voice—'ave you the flue? You remember the gent as played the concertina at aunty's the other night? 'E's clean gone on you. Wants to meet you again at aunty's soon. Wot-o, poor ole aunty!" the 'phone gurgled rapturously. "But wot I want to s'y"—and there was blandishment in the roar—"'ave you any more of that biled pork down your w'y, miss, we 'ad the other night? Pass the word to cookie, an' tell 'er I want to bring a corporal along for a tuck-in an' a sight of 'er bright eye. An' tell Miss Potter I've been a-kissin' of 'er by 'phone. She sent me twenty last night an' I'm goin' 'er ten better"—and sure enough I heard thirty chaste salutes pass along that blameless instrument, for I counted them, while Maria shivered like Lady Macbeth on ice.

"An' I s'y, miss, 'ow's that sweet missis of yourn? Tryin' to find out why ole aunty don't die! Crool, that! I wouldn't be the bloke as owns 'er! I s'y, wouldn't she swear if she could see poor ole aunty!" the young warrior chortled. But his innocent mirth came to an untimely end, for Maria slammed down the receiver as if that long-suffering instrument were to blame, and just, too, when I was dying to hear more of the way they (sometimes) have in the Army.



"'I'M NOT THE COOK!' SHE VIBRATED, SHRILLY."

"I mean to get down very early before breakfast and give Potter notice," said Maria Lady Macbeth, and brooded darkly.

I was at Maria's the very next morning at eleven-thirty, I was so anxious to hear all about it.

"Shoo!" Maria whispered, but triumphantly, as she pulled me into the dining-room. "Potter's gone. Gave me notice first, though I came down in my bedroom slippers on purpose. Said she was obliged to leave at once, as her poor old aunty was waiting for her; and said that to me, too, just after I happened to look out of the dining-room window! Cheek!"

"And what did you say?" I asked, for Maria seemed to expect it—she was obviously working up to a dramatic surprise.

"I said to her, 'Oh, I see'"—and Maria bestowed the glint of a frosty smile on the late interview—"'and so that's your poor old aunty waiting for you in the area behind the ash-bin? How nice she looks in khaki and a black moustache!'"

THE RUBBER.

By

HYLTON CLEAVER.

Illustrated by Arch Webb.

I.

JERRY HOPKINS rose wearily and for the last time faced the man who was beating him. There was a touch of tragedy in the philosophic way he stood to his full height, for his scanty hair was tousled and his nose still bled in a slow desultory way that kept him sniffing. He knew, of course, the omen of the sudden hush which came as his glove met Dan's in a last perfunctory token of friendliness. Once he had even heard a man betting odds that Dan would knock him out, but he did not glance towards the prophet, for he knew by heart how the audience stretched with craning necks and eager eyes in a far arena round the ring. Instead he eyed the man who stood before him, his shoulders hunched, with each hand threatening punishment, and all his strength still patent in the play of his mighty muscles. Once he had met Dan before and won on points; but it was different now. He was very tired, and he realized that at all costs he must keep away if he were to last out this one more round.

So he circled around his man, his feet tip-tapping, with his long left moving warily before him, and his right high up, protectingly. All at once Dan's right foot moved, and his fist swung suddenly, so suddenly that Jerry was nearly caught. Just in time he slipped to the side and closed, but without a flicker of the eye Dan thrust him away, drew back, and hit again quickly, once, twice, three times determinedly; and as Jerry ducked and stumbled, countered and ducked again, Dan's heavy left shot up from his hip and missed by a hairsbreadth.

Jerry drew back and collected himself. He had tried to hurt this man, tried to tire him, tried to trap him and flurry him with trickiness; yet he was still here, just the same, with wide blue eyes and grim set jaw. So far Jerry had kept on his feet, and he knew undoubtedly that if he could hold out for just two more minutes he might hope at the worst for a draw. Yet the crowd were so oddly hushed, as if each man knew what was coming.

Once again Dan sprang, his right found Jerry and sent him reeling aside with a gulp, his left followed, catching him clumsily, and Jerry closed, but with almost insane ferocity Dan struggled free and was upon him again. Just for a while Jerry's long reach worried him. He found that jolting left in his eyes, tried to thrust it aside, tried to work round it, but Jerry's right was there in support. That was just for a time whilst Jerry kept his head and his balance, but at last he tired, and Dan's strength won. In the sudden pandemonium that seemed to have seized the high-strung audience Jerry knew only that every man was on his feet, shouting, not necessarily at him or at Dan, just shouting, and that in spite of all he had not yet gone down.

Rocking, stumbling, sobbing despairingly, he still kept meeting those smashing blows. And suddenly the utter uselessness of it all came home to him. The nineteen rounds in which he had fought cleverly, clearly, and with courage were being mercilessly discounted. Presently one final blow would seal his fate and count as the just equivalent of the science with which he had outfought his man throughout. Brute strength would win. And even as he realized his fate, a swing landed accurately on his jaw, lifting him clear off his feet, and he dropped into a corner and lay there, inert, beaten.

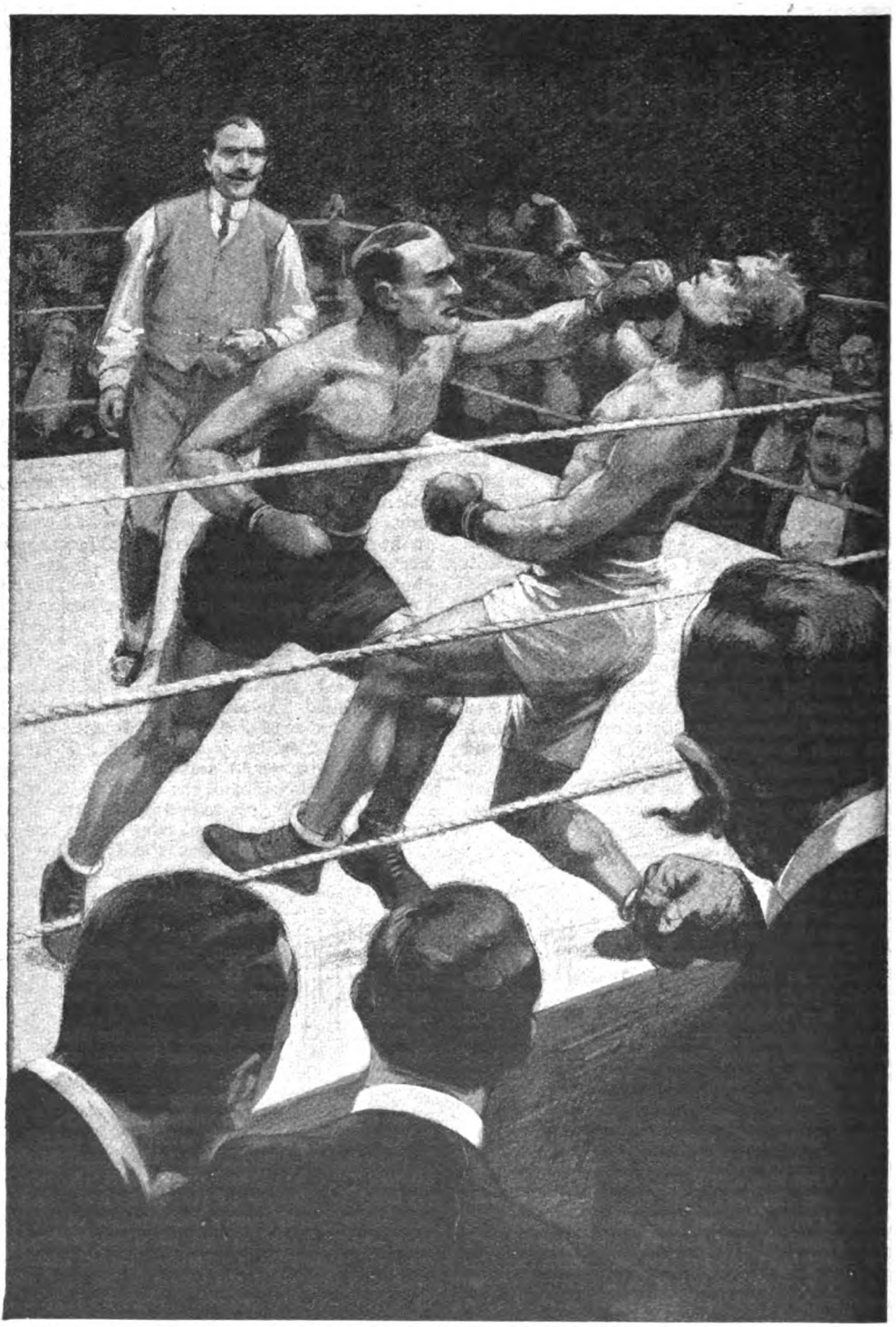
II.

"WELL, well, well, well, well!" said the round little man. "This is good. Cheers you up, you know, to meet someone who hasn't been maimed."

And he held Jerry's hand with the look of one who counts his blessings one by one, and gazed up at him admiringly.

"Eighteen months since I saw you," said another member of the welcoming group. "And I believe you're looking fitter than ever."

Jerry looked round him solemnly, and let them all wring his hand, and occasionally he nodded his head as if it were all just as he had expected, but he took really very little notice of all they were saying. And at last he slowly unbuckled his belt and with a gratified heave lifted his pack and deposited the whole of his equipment in a heap on the ground. Then he leaned his rifle against the pyramid, shifted his cap on to the back of his head, and looked at it with supreme satisfaction. And after a while he turned



"AND EVEN AS HE REALIZED HIS FATE, A SWING LANDED ACCURATELY ON HIS JAW."

his head and gazed at all the people who had been talking to him so very quickly and agreeably for the last ten minutes and nodded to them cheerfully.

"Yes," he said, "I feel fine. I always knew I should when I got back this side again. Shall we go and have a drink?"

"You can't have a drink just now," said the round little man, regretfully. "There's a whole set of rules and things about drinks, you see. They don't let us file in till twelve."

"Is that so?" said Jerry, resignedly, and nodded. "I'll push along then, and get a meal. D'you know where I can put up for a bit?"

"You'll stay with me at the Lion for a start, Hopkins," announced one of the group, with some pomposity. "I've a room all ready for you."

"That's good of you," said Jerry. "I don't know quite where they'll send me afterwards. We've just got to change over with some of the N.C.O.'s at home. So they'll want us on the square pretty quick, I expect. Still, it's fine to have somewhere to go to right away."

He nodded gratefully, and bent and picked up his pack.

"Which way?"

And so, once again, Jerry Hopkins presently sat at lunch and ate from a plate with a shining knife and fork, and drank beer with some bite about it appreciatively from a pewter tankard. Meanwhile they talked to him, asking him questions and telling him of his friends at home. Nobody spoke of Muriel, though his heart was hungry for news of her, and in his mind's eye he kept picturing the little girl that he had never dared to bind to him, in wondrous gossamer dresses as before, and again in a sweet white blouse and a neat blue skirt, and even in pink, with a delicate summer hat sheltering her face from the sun. And with such visions before him he thought, too, of the other man who had wanted her, and who had stayed at home.

"And Dan Middleton?" he asked.

"Dan," they answered, "is still making munitions."

In the silence that followed it seemed that they were waiting for him to speak, and so at last he answered quietly.

"I'm wanting another match with Dan."

There came a murmur of assent.

"He hasn't been boxing lately, of course," said a lean man in the corner.

Jerry looked up. "No," said he, with a touch of asperity, "nor have I."

His host, with a show of tactfulness, cleared his throat.

"Ah, there's something educational," said he, "about the kind of scrap you and he put up. You certainly ought to fight out the rubber."

"Just as soon," said Jerry, "as I find out what time I shall have to myself. I've gone flat-footed, and maybe I'll find myself rheumaticky and stiff. But I mean to meet Dan again—just once."

"You'll have to come down to the same old quarters and train again," suggested a grey-haired veteran by his side, ingenuously. "Miss Muriel's still there with her father. She speaks of you sometimes."

"Oh!" said Jerry, lifting his eyebrows. "Is Dan there much?"

The old man nodded.

"Yes," he said. "Dan's there a good deal."

And he glanced up at Jerry curiously. But Jerry's face was buried, gratefully it seemed, in his tankard, thus saving the situation.

And so when his first week home had passed, and Jerry had settled down and learned his orders, he went one day to his old-time training quarters. His heart beat quickly as he drew near, and knew that presently he would be seeing Muriel again for the first time since he had gone to France just eighteen months ago, and he wondered, too, if Dan would be there. True, it seemed that he had not married her in his absence, and at one time Jerry had been quite terribly afraid of that.

But he had yet to learn just how far Dan had scored through staying at home. He went, without knocking, into the long gymnasium that was an annexe to the house where Saxby, who used to train him, lived, and opened the door just as a man will go back to his old school in holiday time and stand for a moment reverently on the threshold of what was once his class-room. The room was empty. He stood for a moment looking thoughtfully at the practice ring and the punching balls along the walls, and then at last he had turned with a sigh to go towards the house, when there beside him, as if by some divine design, stood Dan. Somehow now that he saw him again Jerry felt curiously calm, and he stood his ground coolly. Yes, he was just as big as ever; his big blue eyes still looked upon one fearlessly.

"Halloa, Hopkins!" he said at last. "I heard you were back."

Jerry nodded his head a little contemptuously, but he spoke no word. He just stood there watching Dan.

"You've come to see Saxby?"

"Yes," said Jerry, "that's why I'm here. I wanted to get in touch with you."

"Indeed?"

"Yes. I didn't expect to find you here—altogether. You're not training, are you?"

"No," said Dan. "Oh, no!"

That was all. It seemed as if either man was equally determined that Muriel's name should not be mentioned.

"Ah!" said Jerry.

"What did you want me for?" asked Dan, and his voice had a hard, metallic ring.

"I want to fight you again."

There came a pause.

"Do you?" said Dan, at last. "I'm not boxing just now."

"Nevertheless," said Jerry, raising his eyebrows slightly, "I ask you to fight." And he spread his hands expressively.

Dan shifted his feet and clasped his brawny fists behind him.

"Have you forgotten," said he, "that I beat

you before, when you'd had every chance to train ? "

" No," said Jerry, " nor that before that I had beaten you."

" H'm ! " said Dan.

" I'm not what I used to be," answered Jerry. " Eighteen months in the trenches make a difference. I'm slower. I've boxed sometimes behind the line and I know that. Still, I'm home now for a spell. They've sent back some N.C.O.'s from France to change over with some of the men from the barrack square, and I shall have time to train a little. And so—when shall we say ? "

" When shall we say what ? "

" How soon," said Jerry, evenly, " will you fight ? "

" I'm not going to fight."

They stood for a full half-minute looking one at the other.

" Are you as much of a coward as that ? " said Jerry, at last.

" Don't use that word," said Dan, " to me."

" It's the only word that suits," said Jerry, fiercely. " You stayed at home and looked on while I went to fight for you, and others like you, and so you've been earning your three or four pounds a week—at home, whilst I've been getting a shilling a day—for going through hell. You've spent your time loafing around here trying to—steal. Now you won't even fight. My God ! if you aren't a coward, Dan Middleton, why then there are no cowards."

Dan looked back at him stolidly.

" I should be getting indoors if I were you."

" I'm going," said Jerry. " Am I to take it you won't fight ? "

Dan nodded his head.

" Then," said Jerry, " from now on, every paper in London shall contain my challenge, so that the public will understand "

III.

At the time most folk considered that warfare had altered Jerry, and so they spoke of him not unkindly. Few, of course, thought that it could be Muriel, for few remembered how he had worshipped her from a reverential distance, and Muriel was quiet and offered no confidences, even to her father.

In due course Jerry left his room at the Lion, for he was ordered to a depot, and there he was soon a notable figure on the square, tall and erect; and his ringing voice made tired platoons newly alert, so that they moved at last with the jerk that they had long been told by monotonous sergeants was very necessary and which they had never understood till now.

And when he spoke, to recruits, of life in the trenches he did so intelligently, but in a way that made the newer warfare seem just a matter of fact rather than of romance, and which calmed their hearts.

And yet he went his way alone and mixed with very few, for his heart was full of bitterness and his soul was restless with the longing to punish the man who had stayed at home to steal away the girl that he had very nearly won; and all day long he wondered how, since Dan would not fight, this punishment could be dealt. His weapons had always been his fists; he knew no others, and in spite of his gentle way and the manners that made a number of folk mistake him for an amateur, he had no trust in words; for speech, even the most sarcastic, is not dependable when one wants to hurt, and see the hurt.

His challenge to Dan appeared occasionally in the sporting papers, and sometimes writers mentioned him and expressed surprise that Dan should be loth to fight again, but nothing came of it all.

And so Jerry nursed his grievance until one evening Saxby himself appeared and found him sitting alone in his billet.

Jerry got slowly to his feet, and Saxby, regarding him curiously, was surprised even then at the smouldering fire in his eyes and his straight, set mouth.

" Halloa ! " said Jerry.

Saxby took his extended hand, and held it a while just as a doctor might, and then he sat down with an air of extreme deliberation and laid his hat and stick upon the table.

" Dan came to see me last night," said he.

" Dan's at your place quite a lot," said Jerry.

There came a silence; then, as if he had never heard the interruption, Saxby said, quietly :—

" Dan's willing to fight."

For the moment Jerry made no move. He just stood watching the other man as if he expected more, and when no other word came he turned at last and walked thoughtfully across the room and back, and as he faced Saxby again he suddenly clenched and unclenched his hands and threw back his shoulders as if a heavy load had been lifted from them at last.

" Thank God ! " said he.

The other raised a wary hand.

" From the way Dan spoke," said Saxby, " I'm wondering who will win." And he slowly looked up.

" I shall win," said Jerry, " I think."

The other nodded his head as if he accepted this observation with reserve.

" Dan seems to mean," said he, " that if he were beaten he would never fight again."

Jerry passed a hand thoughtfully round the back of his neck, and then he raised his eyebrows slightly and nodded his head.

" Maybe he won't."

Saxby got suddenly to his feet.

" You're changed, you know, Jerry; there's no denying that," said he. " And somehow I'm sorry. It isn't good to go into the ring in a temper. Malice is never any use at all in the game, and—well, somebody had to stay at home, you know. You needed shells out there pretty badly at times."

" We needed men, too," said Jerry, harshly. " It wasn't up to any man to offer to stay at home."

The other spread his hands.

" I'm sorry you feel like that," said he. " Well, they'll put up the usual purse, and, of

course, there's the belt. Can you get time off to train ? "

" I'll manage that."

The other paused.

" You'll stay to a bit of grub ? " said Jerry.

' No, I'll be getting along, thanks all the same. I've another appointment yet."

He held out his hand again and picked up his hat.

" Good-bye, Jerry," said he. " Ring me up later on. If you want a trainer, I'll be able to find you one."

" D'you know," said Jerry, " what it is has made Dan alter his mind ? "

" No," said Saxby, " I don't." And he almost added, " Unless, maybe, Muriel."

But this he did not say.

IV.

He was oblivious of the audience and of the buzz of conversation ; he had even forgotten the war and those scenes of agony that he had thought he would never forget, and he did not draw comparison between his feelings now and ast time. The only thing he knew was that at last he had Dan in the ring.

So he sat in his corner with his gloved hands tapping his knees incessantly and his keen eyes holding Dan's, whilst his heart seemed bursting with sheer tense gratitude to God for having given the stay-at-home into his hands at last. The referee was talking, but Jerry heard not one word he said. He noticed another man with a gleaming shirt-front, motioning him to stand up, and he got to his feet with his eyes still fixed unflickeringly upon the other.

Then somebody nudged his arm, and mechanically he stretched out his hand. For a moment his glove was resting unwillingly in Dan's, and then he slowly drew back and waited again till somebody pushed him gently towards his chair, but never once did he glance at the referee or at the crowded seats around him. Always his eyes held Dan's. Someone had dropped his dressing-gown round his shoulders ; now someone had taken it off again. Another was whispering something into his ear. The referee was at the ropes. The man with the gleaming shirt-front was calling for silence. All these things Jerry vaguely understood, and yet he really saw no other figure but that of Dan, dour and silent, in his corner. And suddenly, in the still, respectful silence, a bell rang.

Jerry got hurriedly to his feet, was half-way across the ring almost before Dan Middleton had left his chair. His hand touched Dan's. Then he was hitting him. Oh, the glory of it ! His left driving at the eyes like a piston and his right moving ever before him, whilst his elbow kept away clumsy counters meant for his body. And all the while he was hitting—hitting—hitting—with a half-subdued murmur of wonder urging him on, and his long legs moving quickly, lightly, always keeping him out of distance from Dan's persistent swings whilst he hit and hit again.

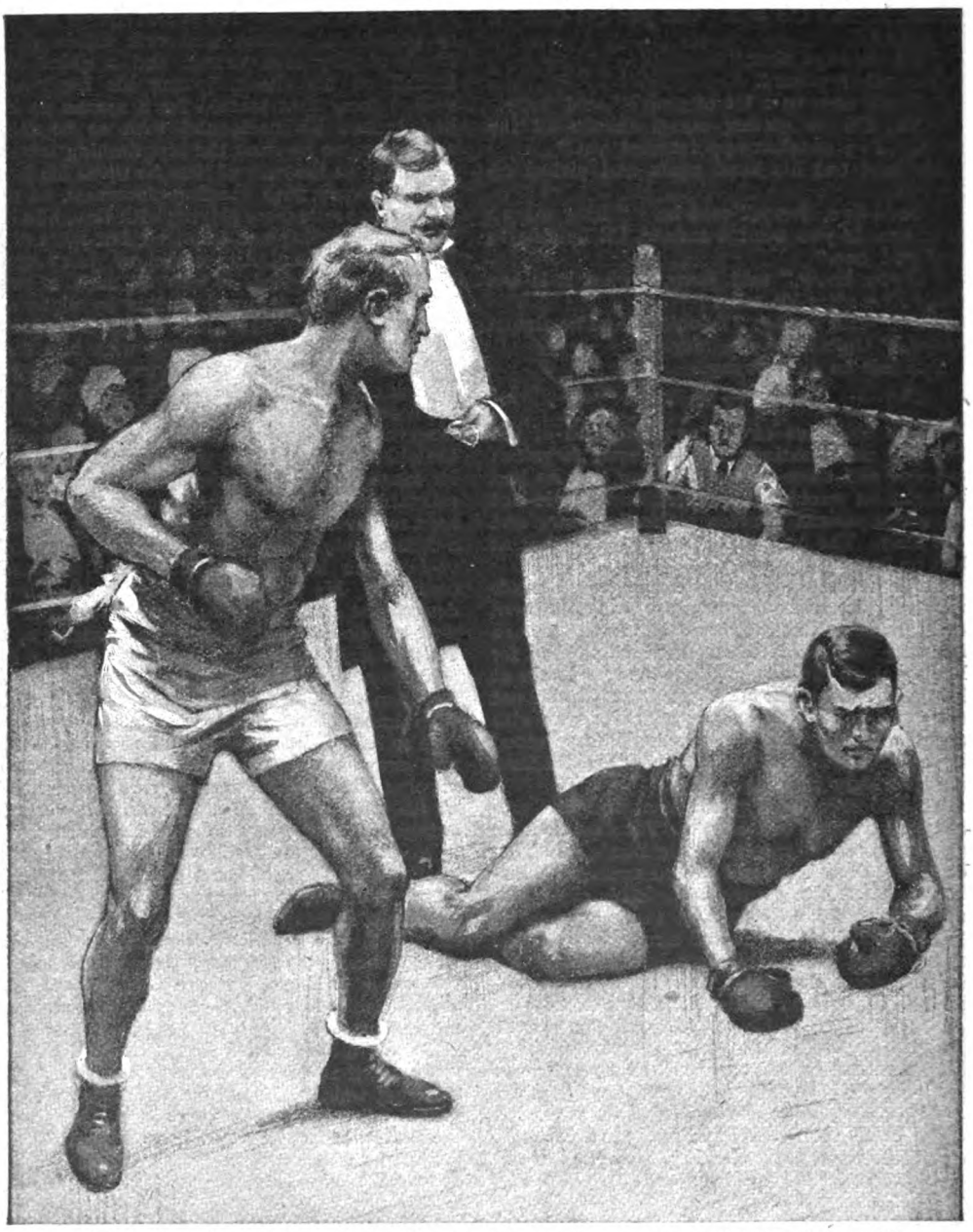
Then suddenly Dan had slipped between a lead and a following right, and whilst Jerry, watching too long the lowering brows and square set jaws of this bitter enemy, was well within range, Dan's mighty arm swung, and a quick blow landed on his cheek, jolting his head aside with a force that seemed for a second as if it had broken his neck, and then as he reeled another came up from the hip, flashing towards his chin. In the nick of time he tilted his head, and was away with dazzling cleverness, so that his left was once more playing with Dan, blinding his vision, teasing and taunting, but most of all bewildering him. And somehow Jerry could really have laughed, it was all such a sweet relief. He had dreamed of this by night and schemed for it by day—just to get Dan in the ring and punish him, to play with him for a while and worry him into a temper, and then to lash out with the horse-kick blows that were his asset when he willed, and thrash him as he deserved. He never considered that Dan could beat him again. Right was upon his side, and he fought with the jealousy of love. It was relaxation, reward for the months he had been kept so cleverly out of the way, fighting in rather a different style. Dan would not wear him down to-day ; he had never felt more supremely confident. He was fit with the fitness of acute desire, just as the sick man who resolves to get well will do so long before mere medicine could set him right.

To-day he would put out for once and all this man who had never in all his fighting career been knocked off his feet. Oh, it was fine ! And so he fought to the end of the round—legs and arms continually a-go, and his left hand tapping Dan's nose and digging inquisitively at his ribs, whilst he slipped round vengeful swings, chuckling way down in his heart.

When other rounds followed, and he still kept up this skilful play, the lookers-on caught his mood, and involuntary applause welcomed occasional dashing blows as Dan stumbled before his speed, and between the rounds, when each went solemnly to his seat, they turned one to the other in keen surprise and appreciation of such truly exceptional lightness of touch and movement in so big a man.

To the fourth round Jerry fought like this, unaware that the audience were with him, uncaring whether he led on points or not, content to follow his own determined plan, and when the fifth round came he began to hit harder and harder, to dance a little less, and to stand and drive with both hands whenever Dan tried to close.

But the pace was beginning to tell even on Jerry, despite himself, though he knew that the day went badly, ever so badly, with Dan, and he took no notice at all of his own more laboured breathing and the first early signs of strain in his thighs and the calves of his legs. It was very, very slight, and Dan was there almost, it seemed, at his mercy, unsteady upon his feet, whilst his mouth was tinged at the corners with blood, and one of his ears was swelling ominously, and his arms still moved in the style of a tired performing bear, pawing at Jerry's leads, and sometimes swinging in desperation at his chin.



"'S—SORRY,' SAID DAN, 'I—CAN'T—GO ON. CAN'T SEE—I—CAN'T LIFT MY——'"

Sometimes these swings had landed, but Jerry just shook his head in a careless way, and answered with harder leads and more vicious digs with his ever-ready right, as if each blow was one point off the score against the stay-at-home.

Soon, in this way, rounds six and seven had passed, and the men who had paid to see a fight were seeing one. To Jerry it would have been as sweet an hour if he could have met his man in private; the audience seemed merely a sort of stage-setting that could not very well be avoided, but he did not need their praise or their applause, and he did not want a purse for winning. He just wanted his chance and his chance had come. Tiring, he still kept on. He would not slow down; he would not spare his man. He knew that he was fighting a public fight in a ring, according to settled rules, and he kept those rules. Otherwise he was there for his own sake only—to

punish. And he meant to punish. And yet he could not knock Dan off his feet. His dearest ambition was not yet won.

Even then it did not seem possible to him that he could lose. He did not even trouble himself to consider that Dan could stand his gruelling and yet be strong enough in the end to win. Confidence was his, confidence that was real and utter, and when the eighth round came he did not, for a minute at least, quite understand.

At the bell Dan had sprung to his feet and jumped in to meet him almost as if some drug had revived his energy. One questioning thought flashed suddenly through the minds of the men who watched, and who had seen such things before. Had Dan been foxing ? Then they leaned forward with hands upon their knees and parted lips, and followed the points of this wonderful round. Dan had gone strangely pale, and his eyes were bright. He came against that extended left, whirled it aside, and closed with Jerry. For a moment or two there was a glorious rally, first of in-fighting, and then of wholehearted blows from the shoulder. Jerry stood up to his man delightedly, giving him blow for blow, but Dan was the stronger, and drove him back. Again, just as before in that fight before the war, men were upon their feet, shouting. Jerry heard them, and struggled heroically to hold his ground, and to this end he lashed out blind blows with left and right, and heard them landing, knew that they must be hurting, saw the blood they drew. And yet Dan was stronger. His blows came heavily, thudding swings, one after the other, any of which should have knocked a man off his feet. Jerry drew back unwillingly, gasping for breath, knew that the other was fighting him into a corner.

And suddenly as he backed he saw Dan's face change suddenly from pallor to an uncanny yellow and saw him sway and recover, heard him sob hopelessly and gulp as that long left caught him again. In a flash Jerry saw his chance and leaped forward. But as he steadied himself for the knock-out blow Dan reeled and fell forward into his arms. Jerry drew away callously, lifted his hand, saw that Dan's mouth was clenched in an effort to brace himself. And then as he paused Dan fell. A roar went up from the audience. Jerry stepped back, watching his man roll slowly on to his side and try to lift up his head. He was not listening to the timekeeper counting the seconds ; he saw that Dan was trying to speak and he listened to him.

" S-sorry," said Dan. " I—can't—go on. Can't see—I—can't lift my——"

And then he flopped on to his face and lay still.

" Out !" said the timekeeper, suddenly, and at once men were in the ring, lifting him up, and one was leading Jerry back to the corner, patting him happily on the back.

V.

They had told him Dan wanted to speak to him, so he went down the narrow stairway into the changing-room that was lit with wired-in gas-jets and looked for Dan solemnly. He sat in a corner with his head against some sacking, and as Jerry came towards him he motioned the little group around him away.

" It's all right," he said, evenly. " Don't get scared. I'm not pegging out or anything like that. I—I've a decent constitution, you know. It only means I'll have to go slow in future."

" What's wrong ? " said Jerry, but he did not offer his hand.

" The blasting furnace."

There came an odd, strained silence.

" The blasting furnace ? " said Jerry, at last.

" Yes. Nobody else knew, you see. I didn't want them to. I told them I just hammered in nails. So I wouldn't let anyone train me for the fight either. I looked after myself, and I managed to pass the doctor here. I was anxious about that, too."

" D'you mean your job is injuring your health ? " said Jerry. " Is it heart trouble ? "

" That's about it," said Dan. " The furnaces always do, they say. I wouldn't believe them at first. I thought I could stick it."

" Why the devil didn't you say so, then ? " demanded Jerry. " I'd no wish to fight an invalid."

" I didn't want anyone to know," said Dan. " These things get round, and I thought it'd get to Muriel in the end."

" You didn't want her to know ? "

Dan shook his head.

" I was under a misunderstanding," he said, with a new humility in his tone. " I thought she liked me all right, and I didn't want to frighten her."

" Well ? " said Jerry, and his heart was beating tremulously.

" I was mistaken," said Dan. " When you kept on taunting me, I went to ask her if she'd marry me. If she'd said 'yes,' I wouldn't have fought."

" Well ? " said Jerry again.

Dan looked at him.

" She said 'no,'" he answered.

And after a long, peculiar pause, in which these two men looked each other straight in the eyes, Dan said :—

" She gave me to understand that there was someone else."

And he held out his hand. Jerry looked at it. He had never meant to shake hands with Dan Middleton again in his life. But he laughed, and his hand slipped into Dan's to hold it.

" Thank you, Dan," was all he said.

Dan nodded his head.

" If I were you," said he, " I should be getting along."

(This article had gone to press before Lord Devonport's resignation.)

PORTRAITS OF CELEBRITIES AT DIFFERENT AGES.

LORD DEVONPORT.

AGE 12.

AGE 22.

AGE 26.
Photo. by Thos. Fall.

WHEN the Campbell-Bannerman Government of 1906 was formed, it was found that two well-known wholesale tea and provision merchants, Messrs. T. Lough and Hudson E. Kearley, had been appointed Parliamentary Secretaries respectively to the Board of Education and Board of Trade. It was related as "a good story" that the Presidents of those Departments, Mr. Birrell and Mr. Lloyd George, were walking one day down Whitehall when Mr. Birrell remarked, "I say, George, I believe you've got the best of the two grocers." Mr. Kearley, now Lord Devonport, can afford to smile at that reported reference. Is he not now one of the Millionaire Captains of Industry summoned by the Prime Minister to the service of his country at a moment of crisis? It is evident that his qualities impressed themselves upon his earliest political chief, now piloting the Ship of State. It has been said of Lord Devonport that *fortiter in re* is his natural possession, *suaviter in modo* a cult.

The Food Controller entered Parliament in somewhat remarkable circumstances. He secured election for Devonport in 1892 as Liberal member after that borough had been held by the Conservatives for a period of twenty years.

When he first sought Parliamentary honours Mr. Hudson Kearley was not the ready and polished speaker that he is to-day. Like so many others, he knew what he wanted to say, but it was not so easy to say it to a critical crowd. Therefore, at the outset he used to commit a very excellent summary to a sheet of ordinary notepaper that could be easily held in the hand, and this, with slight additions, frequently served as the report of his speech in the local newspapers.

AGE 36.
Photo. by Hill & Wakeling.

As time went on the batch of notepaper grew smaller and the notes less full, until eventually a sheet of notepaper, with a few single lines written across, indicating topics to be dealt with, was sufficient. It was sheer force of character that enabled him to triumph over orating difficulties; difficulties accentuated by the fact that his colleague, Mr. E. J. C. Morton, was one of the very best of speakers, whose services were in great demand all over the country. But while Mr. Morton might have talked himself into Parliament, Mr. Kearley had to work his way there. Whether he carried both seats at that election is a moot question.

But he devoted himself to understanding the sheaves of grievances under which the dockyardmen and the naval men of the port laboured at the time, and he studied to such purpose that by the time he became M.P. he knew far more about naval and dockyard questions than the Admiralty representatives in the House of Commons, and became a veritable thorn in their sides. Indeed, he had not long been a member before he started out on the great task of securing the adjustment of the grievances of the thousands of his constituents with which he had made himself acquainted. Carefully avoiding those "grievances" which were more imaginary than real, he tackled those which had solid substance with characteristic energy and persistence.

At first he was received at Whitehall by the permanent officials with the usual suave promises of "serious consideration" from those who inwardly chafed at the industry of the "new broom," and fondly imagined the novelty would soon wear off. But they mistook their man.

AGE 48.
Photo. by Window & Grove.

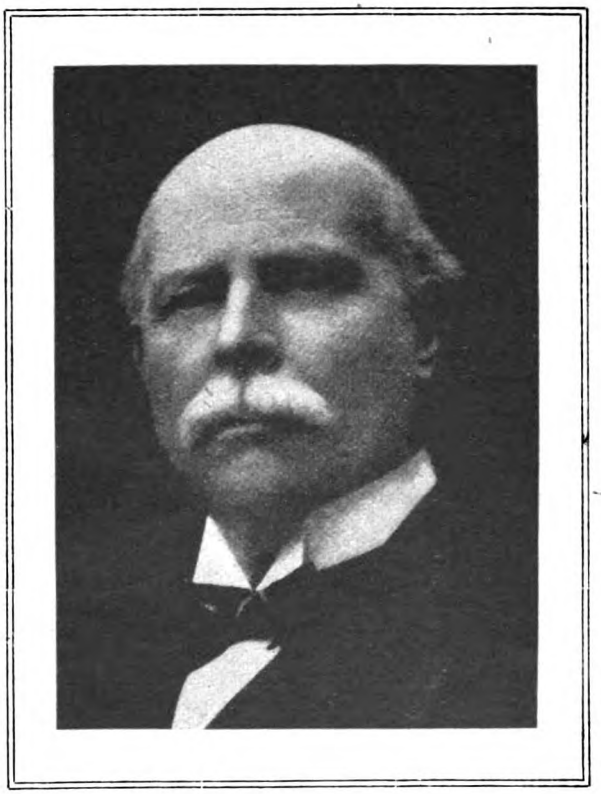
He pursued the subjects, and the responsible officials, until they feared the sight of the member who insisted on promises being fulfilled, and whose pertinacity was even more pervading than the Parliamentary representatives of the Board of Admiralty.

Hitherto it had been customary at the annual visit of the Lords of the Admiralty to the various ports to receive deputations of workmen, who presented petitions asking for various concessions. Months afterwards stereotyped replies would be received, sometimes creating further grievances in the pretence of dealing with those existing. That procedure did not suit the man of energy, the senior member for Devonport; and as time went on grievances were remedied to such an extent that the cynical anticipated that, with the ordinary gratitude accorded to politicians, Mr. Kearley would lose his seat. But, although there were changes, his constituents

remained faithful to their senior member to the end.

A recognition of his public services came in the shape of a baronetcy in 1908, and when, in 1910, he accepted the chairmanship of the Port of London Authority, and the practical administration of that vast organization without remuneration, a peerage was the resultant reward. It was then that a glimpse of unsuspected sentiment peeped out by his taking the somewhat prosaic title of Devonport. Those closely associated might have expected that by that time Sir Hudson had had as much of Devonport as he wanted. But here was a great acknowledgment that as all this public work was done as member for Devonport, so he would be known as Devonport to the end.

His firmness when occasion demanded it was demonstrated in the London Dock Strike of 1911, when the demands of the dockers were absolutely and successfully resisted until after work had been resumed. His administrative ability in the conduct of the chairmanship of that body has been unquestioned. His fearlessness and oblivion to "popularity" has been more recently shown by his acceptance of the office of Food Controller. It was obvious from the outset that this was an office the holder of which would be the subject of the most bitter and general criticism, even beyond that showered on any previous administrator in this country. Touching a Briton's breakfast table is a serious matter. But Lord Devonport knew the question inside and out as few others did, and he did not hesitate.



PRESENT DAY.
Photo. by J. Russell & Sons.

It may be of interest to recall that during his first election campaign Mr. Kearley was popularly known as "Curly"—a sobriquet which emanated but partly from the corruption of "Kearley." For the Parliamentary aspirant, although in some aspects "a little thin on the top," as the barbers say, possessed a wealthy cranial adornment of dark clinging curls, which, with his open and pleasantly-smiling countenance, was singularly effective. Time has altered the colour and wealth of those locks; but Lord Devonport retains a fine presence and a straight and striking figure.

Jiggle's Astonishing Afternoon.

By KEBLE HOWARD.

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

I.

MR. ALBERT JIGGLE smiled to himself as he cycled slowly along that leafy Warwickshire by-way. Mr. Jiggle came from Hackney, and nothing contributed so pleasantly to the self-respect of this little dealer in oddments as a few days among the country bumpkins. Given a pleasant manner and a quick eye for a bargain, you could pay for your holiday ten times over.

Rounding a bend in the road, Mr. Jiggle came quite suddenly on the Hair of the Dog inn. What a picture the old hostelry presented on that ideal afternoon in early summer! The tumbledown roof, the roses clambering over the porch and in at the windows, the pond beneath the shade of the great elm, and Tom Pillow, licensed victualler, standing in the doorway with his long clay pipe.

Mr. Jiggle at once alighted. He had taken a fancy to the landlord's round, honest countenance.

"Afternoon," said Jiggle.

"Good afternoon to you, sir," replied the landlord.

"Have you got a drop of good beer inside?"

"Best in England, sir. Will you please to step into the parlour?"

It was the parlour that Mr. Jiggle wanted. These simpletons always kept their treasures in the best parlour. Many a corner-cupboard, or a grandfather clock, or a bit of exquisite old china had Mr. Jiggle picked up for a fiftieth part of their value in country parlours. In certain districts, no doubt, the yokels were getting cautious; Mr. Jiggle and his friends had themselves to blame for that. But this fellow, this moon-faced loon of a Pillow, was a gift from the gods.

The inn was quite deserted. A hen came into the parlour, looked at Mr. Jiggle, winked rapidly, and retired. Nothing else stirred. Jiggle could hear the landlord drawing him some nice cool beer in the cellar.

Swiftly he looked about him. The usual clock, the usual corner-cupboard, the usual china dogs, the usual sporting prints. Nothing worth the carriage to London. Something unique and portable Mr. Jiggle wanted on this dreamy afternoon. He was becoming an epicure in tasty bargains.

Tom Pillow, that splendid old yeoman with the steady blue eyes, returned with the tankard of ale. He beamed with simple pride as he placed it before his guest.

"Take anything yerself?" inquired Mr. Jiggle, in his very pleasant manner.

"Well, thank you, sir; I'll have a stone ginger."

"Nothing in it?" laughed Jiggle, with a wink.

Mr. Pillow was perfectly serious.

"No, sir, thank you. I'm teetotal."

"Teetotal, eh? That's a queer thing for a landlord! I can't remember that I ever came across a teetotal landlord before!"

"Maybe not, sir. But I have my reasons for never touching a drop."

Tom Pillow went into the bar, helped himself to the stone ginger, and was about to raise the innocuous glass to his lips when he suddenly paused, staring very hard at Jiggle.

"Well?" said Jiggle. "Anything the matter?"

"No, sir, there ain't nothing the matter, but I'd like to tell you a bit of a story, if so be as you can spare the time."

"Drive on," replied Jiggle.

"I was just telling you, sir, that I never touched a drop. That's true, and everybody in these parts knows it; but I can't say as I was always so temperate. In fact, quite the other way. A publican has temptations, and too many of 'em yield. I was one that yielded.

"Yes, sir, I yielded pretty frequent, until one night I came near to losing my life in consequence. I dare say you noticed a deep pond the other side of the road. You can see it now through the winder."

Mr. Jiggle nodded. He was interested in the story, but he wished Mr. Pillow would not stare at him quite so fixedly.

"Well, sir, I'd been over to Stratford market and met a lot of friends, and got a pretty fair load aboard. In plain language, I was drunk. That's straight, and mighty ashamed I am, all this time after, to say it.

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"I wouldn't trust myself to drive home, so I gets a chap to put me in the train at Stratford, and I manages to get out all right at our little station just up the road. It was pretty late, and there wasn't many people about to notice the disgraceful condition as I was in.

"I dare say you can guess, sir, what's coming." And at this the landlord stared even harder at Mr. Jiggle.

"I think I can," said Jiggle. "You fell into the pond, eh?"

"How did you know that?" demanded Pillow, dropping his voice to a mysterious undertone.

"I dunno," replied Jiggle, shifting rather uncomfortably on his chair. "Get on with the yarn."

"All was quiet here. The inn was closed and my wife in bed. I stepped back, silly-like, to admire the old place in the starlight, and into that pond I went, just as you said."

"Well?"

"*Just as you said!*" repeated Mr. Pillow, with great earnestness. "I floundered about for a bit, and all me past come back to me in a flash. That was how I knew as I was drowneding. It was that vivid you'd never believe—right back to infancy!

"And then, sir, the most curious thing happened. I felt meself suddenly grabbed by the seat of me trousers, and pulled out of the pond to life and safety. Through the gloom I could see a gentleman, a stranger. He never said a word, but turned round before I could stop 'im, got on his bicycle, and rode off. Now, sir, there was a funny thing!"

"Is that all the story?"

"That's all the story, sir, except that I never set eyes on that gentleman from that day to this."

"Rum beggar. Just get me another pint, will you?"

Mr. Pillow took up the tankard and went out of the parlour. When he returned he had the tankard in one hand and something which he clasped very tightly in the other. Unfolding his huge fist, he disclosed to the eager gaze of the little Hackney dealer an old gold watch, highly engraved.

"You see this watch, sir?" went on the landlord. "It was left to me by my father, who had it from his father. I don't rightly know how old it is, but they tell me it's worth a lot of money. Now, sir, do you know what I mean to do with that watch?"

"You want me to buy it, I suppose?"

"No, sir; I'm going to make you a present of it."

Mr. Jiggle now stared as hard at Mr. Pillow as Mr. Pillow was still staring at him. He reflected, quickly, that his bicycle was just outside the porch. The man undoubtedly was mad; still, was that Jiggle's fault? Not a bit of it. He would humour the fellow and then take the watch and his chance.

"And why," he asked, easily, with a smile of conscious virtue, "are you going to give your watch to me?"

"Becos," replied Pillow, laying a massive hand on the visitor's little knee, "*you're the man as pulled me out of that there pond!*"

II.

JIGGLE'S London brains worked very quickly. Assuming the coy air of a shy Samaritan whose good deed has been brought to light despite all his efforts at concealment, he gave an embarrassed smile, tried to blush, and looked out of the window.

"Can you deny it?" continued the delighted landlord.

"Am I obliged to answer that question?" murmured Jiggle, examining his nails.

"You *'ave* answered it, sir. By not denying of it you 'ave answered it. I knew you by the size and shape of you. 'Mark my words,' I've said to my old woman many's the time, 'that gen'leman will come this way again one of these days, and then I shall give 'im dad's gold watch.'"

"Oh, but really——" protested Jiggle, eyeing the huge fist that contained the watch.

"Now, sir, I won't take no denial. You saved my life, and I want to make you a small present in return. When I say a small present, it's the best I have to give. This watch has been valued by two jewellers—Mr. Crofts, of Stratford, and a big place in Brum as I can't remember the name of. But they both agreed as it was a very vallyble watch."

"From the glimpse I had of it," suggested Mr. Jiggle, "I should say it was worth at least ten pounds. Now, at the risk of offending you——"

"Ten quid!" The landlord, roaring with laughter, dealt Jiggle a great punch in the chest. "Ten quid, says you! That's a good 'un, that is. Why, my dear sir, Mr. Crofts as I was mentioning, a man I've knowed this thirty year, put it at sixty pound."

"Really?"

"Aye, that 'e did. And the man in Brum at the big shop said nearer eighty. *Now*, sir, you'd ought to 'ave some slight idea of my gratitood."

Mr. Jiggle had suddenly become very excited. Eighty pounds! He could afford to give up his holiday and take the quickest train back

'YOU'RE THE MAN AS PULLED ME OUT OF THAT THERE POND!"

to London. But the watch was still in the landlord's gigantic paw. Warily, Jiggle! Go warily, my boy. There's many a slip!

"It does you great credit," he said. "But, after all, what I did was nothing. A mere nothing. I really couldn't think——"

Mr. Pillow held up a hand, the hand that contained the watch, for silence.

"Nothing to you, maybe, sir, but what about me? What about my old woman? Think of 'er feelings if I'd bin drowneded in me own pond, and all the neighbours 'ad got ter know as I come 'ome dead drunk an' fell in. 'Ow could that poor woman 'ave 'eld up 'er 'ead again? No, sir; *you* may say it was nothing what you did, but *I* say it was worth, not on'y this gold watch, but the grandfather clock as well. And if you give me any more back answers, as sure as my name's Tom Pillow, you'll 'ave to 'ave the clock and the watch both."

Mr. Jiggle shrugged his shoulders. His face wore the whimsical look of a man who, from sheer good-nature, was about to accept an eighty-pound gold watch.

"Well, Mr. Pillow," he said, "I won't argue with you further. If I must take it I must. But with this stipulation, mind you—you must let me do something for you in return."

"That's a good one!" chuckled the landlord. "Let me do something for you, says you. As if you hadn't done something a'ready. My word, if that ain't a beauty!"

"'Arf a minute," pleaded the man from Hackney. "I'm not going to insult you, Mr. Pillow, by offering you money for your watch. Keep calm now. I wouldn't insult you like that, not for the world, but I thought, maybe, you might be interested in some charity or other, as I could give a trifle towards, or something o' that."

"You wish that? There's no call for nothing of the sort, mind."

"I do wish it."

"Then come into the bar."

The landlord led the way, and Mr. Jiggle, closely eyeing the fist that grasped the watch, followed. Mr. Pillow went behind the bar, and took from a nail in the wall a piece of cardboard. At the head of this was inscribed, in amateur lettering, picked out in water-colours:—

"HAIR OF THE DOG INN. RESTERATION FUND."

Below various names or initials were appended in pencil, and against them the amounts subscribed by patrons and friends of the house. These sums varied from one shilling to five guineas.

"Yer see, sir," explained Mr. Pillow, laying the card down on the bar for Mr. Jiggle's inspection, and lovingly polishing the case of the gold watch as he talked, "this 'ere public-'ouse is the pride of the village. I gets support from all classes—from the gentry becos I'm a teetotal man meself, and keeps good order, and from the workin'-folk becos I sells good beer and gives good measure. The roof is a-comin' off, as you may 'ave noticed, and the walls is a-cavin' in, but the owner won't spend a penny puttin' it ter rights. So rather than lose old Tom Pillow—an' I couldn't stay 'ere another winter unless the roof was mended—these 'ere good friends 'ave come forward with their 'scriptions. And when you said—not, mind yer, as there's any call for nothing from you, the man as saved my life!"

Mr. Jiggle read the card with considerable care. He was wondering, in point of fact, just how little he could give. Mr. Pillow, unfortunately, still had the watch. The case flashed in the sunlight as the landlord rubbed it against his sleeve. With every flash Jiggle's cupidity grew keener and keener.

Obviously, he could not put himself down for a shilling. Mr. Pillow might be so disgusted

as to change his mind about the watch. On the other hand, five guineas was too much. What about ten shillings? A guinea, no doubt, would be safer. A guinea was such a gentlemanly sum.

Drawing a pencil from his pocket with a careless air, Mr. Jiggle wrote on the card, "A. J., £1 1s." Then he pushed the list across to the landlord.

Honest Tom Pillow put on his spectacles to read the amount.

"That's 'andsome," he said. "That's very 'andsome. You won't put yer full name, I s'pose?"

Mr. Jiggle modestly declined. But there was one thing he would do—he would have a small gin. To his intense disappointment, the landlord slipped the watch into his own pocket whilst he drew the gin.

"Let's see," reckoned Tom Pillow. "Two pints of ale—sixpence; one go of gin—fourpence; ginger-beer—twopence. That'll be one-pun-two ter see us square, I think."

Mr. Jiggle produced his purse and opened it. What if the landlord forgot, after all, to give him the watch?

"Should I—should I pay now?" he suggested.

"If you please, sir."

"You—you wouldn't rather have a cheque for the subscription?"

Mr. Pillow shook his head emphatically.

"I never touches cheques."

"Very well."

The risk was small, for the landlord was honesty personified. In business Mr. Jiggle had often taken much greater chances than this. Thirty shillings were laid upon the bar, swept into the till, and eight shillings change given.

And then Mr. Pillow went on polishing the watch.

"Well?" said Mr. Jiggle, in the tone of a man ready for the road.

"Eh?" replied the landlord, intent on the watch.

"I must be getting along."

"That's you, then." And he again slipped the watch into his pocket.

"Should I——"

"Beg pardon?"

"I was wondering if—if—if I'd have another small gin."

Mr. Pillow shook his head.

"In my opinion," he observed, "you've 'ad quite enough."

Mr. Jiggle stared. There was a decided change of manner about the landlord. The air of respect, to say nothing of fawning gratitude, was missing.

"You're joking," ventured Jiggle.

"Not me. I wouldn't see a man as saved my life take ter drink, not if I could save 'im from sin by putting out me 'and. And my advice to you," concluded Tom Pillow, pointing towards the open door with a huge forefinger, "is this—*'op it!* See?"

Dimly, Mr. Jiggle began to see. He began to understand that the sharp fellow from Hackney had been diddled by the simple Warwickshire yokel. And as he stared in growing amazement at that sinister great finger, all finesse deserted him.

"What about that watch?" he demanded.

"What watch?" countered the landlord.

"You know very well what watch. The watch you said you were going ter give me for pulling you out of the pond."

"The man's dreaming," said Tom Pillow to the ceiling.

"Call this a sense of gratitude?" sneered Jiggle, viciously.

"No," returned the landlord, shortly.

Unexpectedly, the man from Hackney changed his tactics. He laughed, not very mirthfully, and rubbed his hands.

"Well," admitted Jiggle, "I give you best. You fair did me for that guinea. Ha, ha! Neat a thing as ever I come across."

"*Did* you?" repeated Tom Pillow. "'Ow d'yer mean—*did* you?" There was an earnest look on his childlike face that Jiggle should have noted.

"You know very well. That guinea fer the resteration o' the pub. That was a clean do, that was. Look 'ere; give me that back an' I'll call it quits about the watch."

The landlord, keeping his large round eyes on the man from Hackney, sauntered round from behind the bar. Jiggle, much in the spirit of King Agag, wondered what was going to happen. Nothing, of course, at all personal. Such things were not allowed in a civilized country. The police would not tolerate personal violence.

Tom Pillow, after a glance out of the window, came quite close to his visitor, and stooped to look into the shifty little eyes.

"You're drunk," he said, quietly.

"I'm not," protested Jiggle.

"I say you're drunk, and what I say in this pub goes. Will you get out or must I throw you out?"

"I won't go without my guinea!"

"You won't, eh?"

"No, I'm——"

He found himself off the ground. He kicked and swore, and even pinched, but Tom Pillow could not feel pinches. Carrying the little man

to the open door, he flung him into the roadway like a rotten apple, and then, without hurry, closed the door.

III.

MR. ALBERT JIGGLE, smothered in dust and seething with malice, picked himself up. To his great satisfaction, a policeman was coming up the road, who must have witnessed the whole incident. Mr Jiggle ran—yes, ran—to meet him.

"Did you see that, constable?"

"See what?" replied the constable. He was nearly as big as Tom Pillow, and just as childlike in expression. They might, in fact, have been brothers.

"You saw me thrown out of that public-house?" continued the excited Jiggle, looking up at the constable.

"Maybe I did and maybe I didn't."

"Of course you did. That man, that landlord, threw me out. I'm going to have the law on him. I'll teach him manners before I've done with him. I'm from London, I am!"

"Ho! You're from Lunnon, are yer?"

"Yes, I am, and I know the law! I'll have that great brute up for assault, and make him pay damages as well as a fine! You come along with me, constable. I'm going to give him in charge before he's a minute older!"

The man from Hackney ran to the door of the inn and kicked it. The door opened, and the landlord filled the doorway. He threw the constable a cheerful sideways nod.

"Arternoon, Bob."

"Arternoon, Tom."

"This is the man!" cried the passionate Jiggle. "I order you to arrest him, constable!"

"Me arrest Tom Pillow?"

"Certainly!"

"What for? What's 'e done?"

"You know what he's done. You saw it. He threw me out into the road."

"For bein' drunk," put in the landlord, quietly.

"I wasn't drunk!" almost screamed the little man from Hackney. "If I was drunk five minutes ago, I should be drunk now. I appeal to you, constable. Am I drunk?"

"You certainly act like it," said the constable.

"So would you," asserted Mr. Jiggle, "if a man did you out of a guinea and then threw you into the roadway!"

"Did you out of a guinea? 'Ow was that, then?"

"'E very kindly give a guinea t'ords the resteration fund," explained Tom Pillow. "I told 'im twice there was no call to do it. You can see 'is 'nishuls in 'is own writin' on the card."

"Yes," cut in Jiggle, "but why did I give it?"

"Goodness of 'eart," suggested the landlord.

"That be blowed! 'E said 'e was going to give me his gold watch for pulling him out of the pond and saving his life!"

"Pond! What pond?" asked the constable.

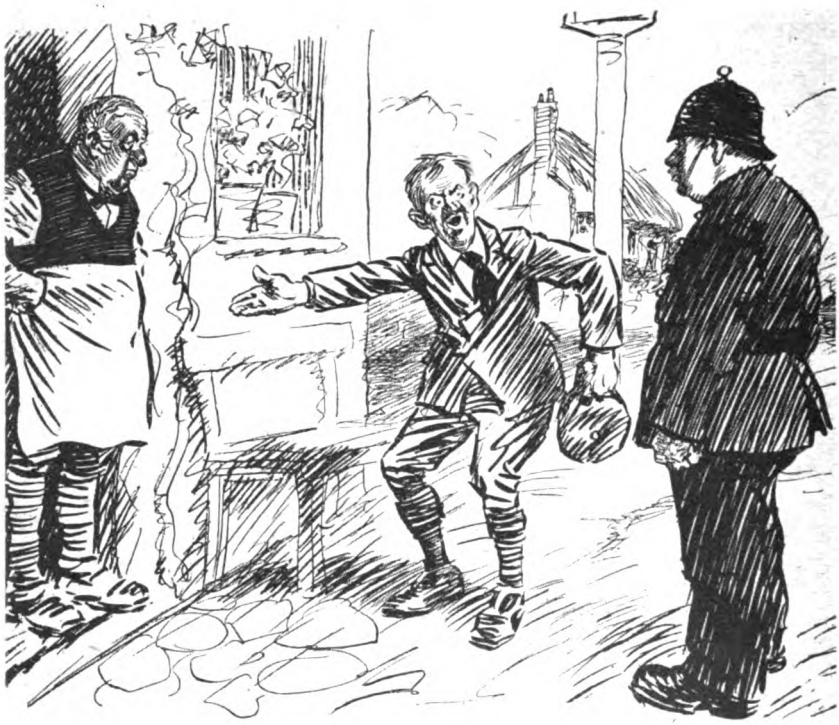
"That pond in front of yer nose," said Jiggle.

"'Ave you bin in that pond, Tom?"

"Not me, Bob. Anyway, it ain't a foot deep."

Both the giants looked placidly down at the man from Hackney. And Mr. Jiggle, looking up at them as they leant their huge shoulders against the doorposts, suddenly realized that there was nothing to be gained by further argument.

"CARRYING THE LITTLE MAN TO THE OPEN DOOR, HE FLUNG HIM INTO THE ROADWAY."



"I ORDER YOU TO ARREST HIM, CONSTABLE!"

"Very well," he said, taking hold of his bicycle, "I shall know what to do when I get to London and see my lawyer."

But the constable was not done with him yet. Reaching out a long arm, he gripped the handles of the bicycle.

"'Arf a minute. You said, I think, as you was from Lunnon?"

"Yes, I am. So much the worse for you."

"We shall see about that in a minute. Did you call at a cottage this morning about two miles down the road and buy a piece of lustre?"

"That's my business."

"And mine. You seem to answer very nicely to the description as was give me. You bought that bit of lustre off an old lady. You gave 'er two bob for it. That's right, ain't it?"

"I refuse to answer your questions. Let go my machine!"

"Don't forget as I can lock you up for bein' drunk. Tom Pillow will give evidence. You smell of beer at this moment."

"Well, since you want to know, I did give two shillings for the lustre. What about it?"

"This about it. That bit o' lustre is worth a sovereign if it's worth a penny. And you know it. And this more about it. That old lady 'appens to be my mother, mine and Tom's 'ere. I sent word on to Tom to keep you till I come. That's what about it! And now we should like to know what you mean to do about it?"

"This is a put-up job, then?"

"Looks like it," observed Tom.

"What do you want me to do?"

"Give up the lustre or pay the dif-l'rence."

Mr. Jiggle reflected quickly. He was in a tight corner. The Pillow brothers were inexorable. The beastly Bob would certainly lock him up if necessary, and the horrible Tom would get him a month in jail or a heavy fine.

Slowly, reluctantly, trembling with subdued rage, he paid over the eighteen shillings. Then, without another word, he mounted his machine and rode off down the road.

IV.

THE Pillow Brothers, as soon as the man from Hackney had disappeared, went into the bar. Tom, as a matter of course, drew two pints of the best ale, and they drained their tankards before speaking. Then:—

"Was that that cracked bit," asked Tom, "that mother 'ad on the mantelshelf in the parlour?"

"That's right. 'E never noticed the crack or 'e wouldn't have paid two bob for it."

The landlord, very respectfully, drew his brother another pint.

"So you worked the watch trick on 'im while you was waiting?" asked Bob.

"Ah! Wunnerful 'ow easy these Lunnon chaps fall for it."

And the teetotal landlord drew a second pint for himself.

ANNETTE KELLERMAN DRESSED FOR A DIP.

HOW I SWAM INTO FAME AND FORTUNE.

By

ANNETTE KELLERMAN.

IT should elate the optimist and greatly depress the pessimist to know that I, who stand for all that is athletic, agile in women, for all that is muscular, physically enduring; that I, who am a high-diver, a long-distance swimmer, with a list of unbroken records; that I, who used while in training for the English Channel events to walk twenty-five miles a day, a mere constitutional, should have been an almost hopeless cripple in my childhood. But such was the case!

I was born in Sydney, New South Wales, "umty-um" years ago. My father was a typical Australian. My mother was Alsatian and French. They let me walk when I was nothing but a baby, and my feet got turned in and my knees bulged out from overweight, so that I had to wear iron braces to my hips. I was very sensitive about my poor little deformed legs, and I was permitted to wear long dresses to hide them. These braces hurt me dreadfully, especially the one on my left leg, and I used to hide in cupboards and take them off whenever I could do so. Further, to discourage me in any hope of ultimate recovery, I was told that my bones had chalk in them. And I dare say, if I had been left to my own devices, I should be hobbling about to this day in my leather and steel contraptions, instead of playing tennis or taking twenty-five mile "constitutionals."

But one day when I was five years old my dad informed me that I was to take swimming

lessons. Now, another paradox in my career was the fact that when a little child I was terribly afraid of the water. I don't know why. It may have been my helplessness, or it may have been the fear that I would have to expose my crippled legs.

I pleaded with my dad not to make me swim, but he urged that he and the doctor had talked the matter over, and had decided that swimming was the only thing that would help me. So I was taken to Cavill's Baths in Sydney and taught to swim. The other members of my family had learned in four or five lessons, but it took me eighteen. And, let me tell you, I was taught correctly, which is a great essential.

I cannot describe the joy I felt as I realized that, little by little, strength was beginning to creep into my legs, unhampered while I was in the water. No one but a cripple *could* understand it. With strength came hope, and hope, reacting, gave me more strength, and presently my legs began to take on normal shape.

At the same time I was given exercises in calisthenics. I would hold on to a table and an attendant would pull my legs backward, forward, and sideways. It was not until I was thirteen years old that my legs were practically straight, and for some years after that my left leg was still susceptible to any unusual strain when I was very tired. I was compelled to wear high shoes until I was eighteen, and to this I attribute the fact of my small ankles.

All the time the aquatic side of me was gaining the ascendancy. I had become a regular duck in the water. I began by doing hundred-yard stunts—sprints, if you please—fetching or under-water swimming, and all that sort of thing. Then I went in for the endurance side of it. Before long I could swim a mile, then two; and after a while I did ten miles near Melbourne on the Yarra.

These feats presently began to attract attention. The papers took me up, and when I'd been sufficiently advertised to make it worth while, I was engaged by the management of an aquarium out there, and got five pounds a week, which I thought was wonderful.

I Leave Home to Set Out to Face the World.

Now, Australia is a very big country, but very small in possibilities—the kind of possibilities I was looking for. I had decided by this time that I could do great things in the water, and I realized that my best chance was to go to one of the big countries, preferably England or America, where sporting events yield the widest reputation and the most money. So dad and I decided to go to England.

But for a long time we could find no one in England to take a professional interest in me. They didn't understand us. Presently, what little money we were able to bring with us gave out. We got into such desperate straits that we had to take rooms in quite a poor neighbourhood.

Dad used to put on his best clothes and make the rounds of the managers' offices with me every morning, but he couldn't tell them that we were living in such a poverty-stricken place, for that would have condemned us at once in their eyes. There was a comical side to it, too. A manager would begin, "I'll drop you a line," and dad would hastily interpose, "No, no!—you see, we may be moving—I'll come round to-morrow or next day." Dad was a good actor at that!

The managers would listen to us and ask what I could do, then shake their heads dubiously. No one of them wanted to turn his stage into a tank—which meant money and a heap of inconvenience—"just to see a woman make a fish out of herself!"

That's the way they put it.

Nor could I get them to take any interest in the records I'd made in Australia. They wouldn't bank on them. So we went the rounds, day after day, without any luck!

A Twenty-five-Mile Swim to Attract Attention.

Finally, just to make the English people take notice of what I was doing and *could* do, I swam down the Thames from Putney Bridge to Blackwall, something like twenty-five miles. It is not a hard swim, since the tide carries you along so swiftly, but a dirty one, with so many nasty little boats and all the rest of it. I came out with my face black from Thames River mud.

Shortly after this performance, the sporting man of one of the daily papers took an interest in my enterprise. He examined my records, and, after some thought, decided to chance it. "I'll tell you what I'll do," said he. "If you'll try the English Channel I'll 'run' you."

Heavens and earth! That meant the "great event," the event that occurs only once a year! Dad and I stood there dumbfounded!

The sporting editor rattled on, "I'll give you eight pounds a week" (I caught my breath), "and you'll train under these conditions: you go down to Dover, and I'll

announce from day to day that you're to swim from one summer resort to another. For instance, from Deal to St. Margaret's Bay first, and so on and so on. We'll tell 'em just what time you're goin' to start and what time you're goin' to get to the other place. All the people of both towns will be on hand to watch the game. We'll boom you for all we're worth. Will you do it?"

Would I do it! I summoned what nonchalance I could and told him I thought the terms were satisfactory.

"Now look here," he went on. "I don't want you to make a fool of me or my paper. When you go in for the big event in the Channel you may or may not win; but I want you to stop in the water a long enough time to justify my confidence in you. I'll pay you so much for the first three hours. If you stay in four hours, I'll give you so much more, and I'll increase the amount for each additional hour you're in the water."

ANNETTE KELLERMAN, THE FAMOUS SWIMMER AND CINEMA ACTRESS.

The newspaper paid our fares to Dover, which was to be our headquarters, and we reached that place with exactly one ha'penny in our pockets. We had no luggage—which meant we should probably have to pay in advance at any boarding-house. Things looked black.

Presently dad decided to go to one of the best houses in the place. That was just like him. We walked boldly in and demanded—demanded, mind you—to see some rooms. Very well! We were shown them. Dad asked me in a very dignified manner whether I thought they would suit.

"I think so," said I, trying to appear none too eager.

"How much?" said dad, turning to the landlady.

"Two guineas each per week." And we with only a ha'penny and nothing coming in for seven days!

At this point dad did a fine piece of acting. He told the landlady that a well-known newspaper was backing me to swim the Channel, and what our plans were. She listened intently, and was so much impressed that when dad thrust his hand into his pocket, observing in a very lordly way, "Perhaps I had better give you a cheque," she was quite profuse in her refusal to take it.

But we didn't dare to ask for any loan, however small. We even bought no newspapers for the whole week.

During the six weeks we were in Dover I swam an average of seventy-five miles a week, and some days walked no less than twenty-four miles, walking being splendid exercise for a swimmer. On one occasion I swam from Dover to Ramsgate, a distance of twenty-four miles, and after I had done that I felt that I was more or less ready for the Channel experiment.

There were seven of us that made the start for the Channel swim that night. One of these was Burgess, who afterward actually did swim from England to France, in twenty-three and a half hours. Wolff, who was a very fast swimmer, almost succeeded.

A Terrific Swimming Contest in the English Channel.

We didn't all start together in a bunch. The swimmers, with their little bands of friends and backers, and the representatives of the different papers who were "running" them were more than a mile apart in some cases. I started from Dover, others from St. Margaret's Bay, three miles off, while some started from points farther along the coast. The reason for each having a different point of departure from the others was that each had studied the coast and the tides and had his opinion as to the most advantageous point of departure. You see, your course is not a straight but a zigzag one. If it were only

a matter of swimming twenty-two miles, the distance from Calais to Dover, the task would not be so difficult, even if the sea were a bit choppy. But having to zigzag by reason of the tides, the actual swimming distance across the Channel is something more than forty miles.

It was about two o'clock in the morning when we assembled on the beach. Channel swimmers always start in the middle of the night in order to get the hardest three or four hours of the work done while they feel most fit. Then, when their strength and courage begin to wane, daylight comes and gives them new hope and vigour. The first two hours of a long-distance swim are very difficult. It takes one that long to settle down to steady work, to get one's pace, to feel confident that one is doing the regulation twenty-eight strokes to the minute.

After the pores of my skin had been rubbed full of porpoise oil and my goggles glued on, I was ready. The men, who started from different points along the coast, wore no clothes, but I was compelled to put on a bathing suit. Small as it was, it chafed me. When I finished, my flesh under the arms was raw and hurt fearfully.

We were off. I was accompanied by a steam-tug and a row-boat, as was each of my rivals. I swam practically between the two, the steam vessel keeping some three hundred feet off, so that I would not be affected by the wash, and the smaller craft about half that distance, always ready to come to my instant aid, should I need it.

One starts out absolutely alone, so as to have everything authentic. No one is allowed to give you the slightest assistance. If you so much as touch the boat or rest your fingers on the tip of an oar you're "declared out." Every half-hour the big boat slows down and you swim alongside, and they pass you a long-snouted chemical cup containing hot soup or chocolate, which you snatch as they let go of it. Or they hand you tiny inch-square sandwiches from the end of a long stick.

Getting Sea-sick while Swimming.

A manufacturer had supplied me with a good deal of chocolate as an advertisement, and I used it. But I am a "liverish" person, and so I'd been out only four hours when the chocolate and the chop of the water made me very sea-sick. From then on, for the rest of the swim, I was sea-sick every half-hour. But I stuck it out for six and three-quarter hours. You will wonder that I remained in the water so long, suffering from sea-sickness and the chafing of my bathing suit, and cold and weariness. But dad and I were desperately poor—we must have money. And I kept saying to myself, "The longer you stick, the more you get!"

For this attempt at swimming the Channel I got thirty pounds. And I lost seven pounds of flesh during the swim.

The other contestants were in the water longer than I was, but not one of them got so far, though they were all men. The winner, so far as endurance was concerned, was a Yorkshireman, who was well-trained and had a good "tummy." And, believe me, a good "tummy" is very essential for that kind of a contest. One must have a good furnace at work, not only to supply one with steam, but to protect oneself against the extreme cold of that North Sea water.

On other occasions I have tried to swim the Channel. Once I stayed in the water ten and a half hours and got three-quarters of the way across. My record—for a woman—still holds. I had the endurance but not the brute strength that must be coupled with it. No woman has this combination. That's why I say none of my sex will ever accomplish that particular feat.

After this, I went in for long-distance swimming entirely. The *Auto*, the big sporting paper in Paris, was "running" an annual event called "The Swim through Paris." The course, a little over seven miles, runs practically through the heart of the city. Probably half a million people crowd the banks of the Seine to witness this contest.

I entered the race with seventeen men. Each swimmer was accompanied by an attendant in a little boat, who passed him things to eat whenever he wanted them, and looked after him generally. In my boat were dad, a friend, and two oarsmen. As I pushed my way through the dirty water of the Seine, they would cry to me, "Come on, mademoiselle; you've only one more kilometre, two more bridges, that's all!"

This was one of those kindly prevarications intended to cheer me up. But they shouldn't have done it, for I would make a dash or sprint—trying to wind up with a flourish—and would get out of my stroke and use up most of my reserve strength. Because the river was full of curves and I couldn't see ahead, they fooled me for a little while.

At last, when I thought I'd reached the last bridge, and they called out, "Only two kilometres more!" I was so disappointed

DIVING ONE HUNDRED FEET INTO THE SEA.
A THRILLING SCENE FROM "A DAUGHTER OF THE GODS," THE FILM IN WHICH ANNETTE KELLERMAN PLAYS THE LEADING PART.

that I began to cry. I was worried, too, for I was to receive forty pounds for the race if I finished—and, as usual, we needed the money!

Just then Burgess came along. He had started, handicapped, half an hour behind me, but had caught up. He saw that I'd been crying, and asked me what was up. When I told him how they'd been fooling me, he was very sympathetic. "Come on," he urged, and swam alongside me, pacing me, and by his chivalry running the risk of losing the race himself, for the racers behind were coming on apace.

At the last hundred yards we made a dash for it, and touched the goal together—a tie! There were eighteen starters, but only four of us finished. It was the most thrilling race I was ever in!

After my Seine swim I sought new worlds to conquer, or, at least, new worlds sought me, for Baroness Isa Cescu, the best-known Viennese swimmer, challenged me for a race in the Danube from Tuln to Vienna, a distance of thirty-six kilometres, about twenty-two miles.

The Danube is very treacherous. Its waters are icy cold and it runs so fast that there are dangerous eddies everywhere. Half the game in swimming that course was in knowing your ground.

Well, we started, swimming far apart. I had not gone far before I found myself sucked into a shallow whirlpool. The water was only about six inches deep and was whirling with great force and speed over a bed of sharp pebbles. Before I could work my way out, my legs were one mass of cuts and bruises.

I won the race easily, by about three-quarters of an hour, I think.

After a few more contests, I gave up long-distance swimming and went back to the London Hippodrome for the winter. But the records I made, for a woman, all hold to this day: two, five, and ten mile swims in Australia; Putney Bridge to Blackwall, twenty-four miles; Dover to Ramsgate with a man named Wolff, twenty-four miles in four hours twenty minutes; Ramsgate to Margate, ten miles; Dover to Deal, nine miles; two Channel swims; "The Swim through Paris," twelve kilometres in three hours forty-five minutes; Tuln to Vienna, thirty-six kilometres.

The following spring dad and I went to America. We soon found that there was no long-distance swimming to be done, and as

we were still very poor I determined to capitalize the various water-feats, particularly high-diving, that I had learned in Australia. That's how I came to be known in America as more or less of a water-feat artiste than as a long-distance swimmer.

And as a result, at last I was making good money steadily.

After a season in Chicago I went to Boston, where Mr. Keith saw me and offered me sixty pounds a week for two shows a day. As it meant only fourteen shows a week, I decided to take it. So contracts were signed.

My diving act, the first of the kind to be done on the stage, was such a novelty and drew such crowds that when I reached New York, after a few weeks on the road, a rival manager offered me three hundred pounds a week to work for him in the summer alone. He had no objection to my working for Keith in the winter.

But Keith wouldn't have it. Then I decided to break with Keith for the other man and work during the summer and lie idle in the winter. Keith was furious, and the famous lawsuit followed in which Mr. Taft, brother to the former President, was counsel for Keith. The courts decided that the summer arrangement was inequitable. Then Keith offered me a two hundred and forty pounds a week contract, and I played for two years without a day's vacation.

I remained in vaudeville two and a half years, when I realized that my vogue was taking a very decided slump, that the diving Venus proposition was rapidly becoming *passé*. I was being copied all over the country. And then, when they tried to cut my salary by fifty pounds a week, I realized that the end was close at hand.

For a long time I had had an idea that I couldn't develop in any way except through motion-pictures. So I tried my fortune among the various moving-picture studios. But none of the directors seemed to want me. Then I asked Captain Leslie Peacock, a successful scenario writer, to write a scenario about fairies and mermaids for me. A few days later, President Laemmle, of the Universal, sent for me. Captain Peacock had talked to him about my scheme. While Laemmle seemed dubious about my project, he was willing to discuss it with me. The outcome of our interview was that Captain Peacock wrote "Neptune's Daughter." And let me say that, although they made two hundred thousand pounds out of it, nobody in that concern had any faith in the picture until it was put on at the Globe Theatre, in New York, and they realized what the public thought of it. They begrudged every bit of the seven thousand pounds that went into it.

We went to Bermuda to make the picture, as that island offered every natural facility that was required. It was while engaged on this job that the director and myself met with an accident which came near putting an end to our motion-picture ambitions. We were doing an under-water fight scene in a large tank, the front of which was a three-quarter-inch glass plate. We had asked for an inch and a half plate as the smallest thickness that could safely resist the pressure of the water, but were refused on the ground that such a thing would be too expensive.

While we were doing the fight, all of a sudden the front wall of the tank burst with a report like a cannon. My only thought as this happened was to keep my feet and go with the great rush of water through the hole in the glass, which was surrounded with great, jagged points. The outrush carried me twenty feet beyond the tank, where I lay, bruised and bleeding, with a great piece of flesh cut from my right foot. But the director, not having had my water experience, lost his head and was drawn through the hole sidewise and stranded among a lot of broken glass. He looked as if someone had chopped him all over with a hatchet. One wound alone, running from his armpit to his wrist, required forty-six stitches.

We were both sent to the hospital, where I lay with a wounded foot for six weeks, and the director remained for five weeks.

When I had finished my work at Bermuda, I wrote down a list of the water-feats I had done in "Neptune's Daughter," and determined to surpass them in my next piece. This I did in "A Daughter of the Gods." The principal features of value in the new picture are my water-tricks—I invented some new ones—and the kiddies. We employed about eight hundred children, nearly sixty per cent. of whom were under six years old.

But to sit in the audience and watch yourself on the screen is a poor substitute for anyone who has been on the other side of the footlights. So the stage fascination seized me again, and I signed up for another big mermaid spectacle.

The old days of my crippled childhood seem unbelievably distant as I write this. My early physical misfortune has turned out to be the greatest blessing that could have come to me. Without it I should have missed the grim struggle upward and the reward that waited at the end of it all.

A POINT OF DETAIL.

A Detective Story of the Trenches.

By "SAPPER."

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

"HIST!" The officer gripped the sergeant's arm just above the elbow, bringing his mouth close up to his ear. "Don't move." The words were hardly breathed, so low was the tense, sudden whisper, and the two men crouched motionless, peering into the darkness which enveloped them.

"Where, sir?" The sergeant slowly twisted his head till it was almost touching that of the man beside him; and he too, whose normal voice resembled a human foghorn, scarcely did more than frame the words with his lips.

"Behind that mound of chalk. Several of them." The sergeant's eyes followed the line of the outstretched hand until they picked up the dark, menacing lump in the ground twenty feet away. Sombre, grim, apparently lifeless, outlined against the night sky, it appeared almost monstrous in size to the men who lay on the edge of a shell-hole with every nerve alert. A bullet spat over them viciously, but they did not alter their position—they knew they were not the target; and from their own lines came the sudden clang of a shovel. All around them the night was full of vague, indefinable noises; instinctively a man, brought suddenly into such a place and ignorant of his whereabouts, would have known that there were men all around him—men whom he could not see, men who flitted through the shadows bent on mysterious tasks, men who moved silently with eyes strained to pierce the darkness. Behind the German lines a trench tramway was in use; the metallic rumble of the trolleys on the iron rails came continuously from the distance. And suddenly from close at hand a man laughed.

"Do you see them?" Once again the officer was whispering, while he still grasped, almost unconsciously, the sergeant's arm. "There—there! Look!"

Two or three shadowy blobs seemed to move uncertainly above the edge of the chalk mound and then disappear again; and a moment afterwards from almost on top of them came a hoarse, guttural whisper. The officer's grip tightened convulsively—the night of a sudden seemed alive with men close to them, pressing around them. Almost involuntarily he got up and moved back a few steps, still peering, straining to see in the inky blackness. Something loomed up and bumped into him, only to recoil with a muttered oath; and even as he realized it was a German he heard his sergeant's low voice from a few feet away. "Where are you, sir? Where are you?" The next moment he was back at his side.

"Get back your own way," he whispered. "We've bumped a big patrol. Don't fire." And as he spoke, with a slight hiss a flare shot up into the night.

Now, had it not been for that one untimely flare, this story would never have been written. Indecent curiosity in other wanderers' doings in No Man's Land is an unprofitable amusement; while the sound of strafing, to say nothing of revolver-shots, is calculated to produce a tornado of fire from all directions, administered impartially by friend and foe alike. Wherefore it is more than likely that but for the sudden ghostly light both the Englishmen would have got

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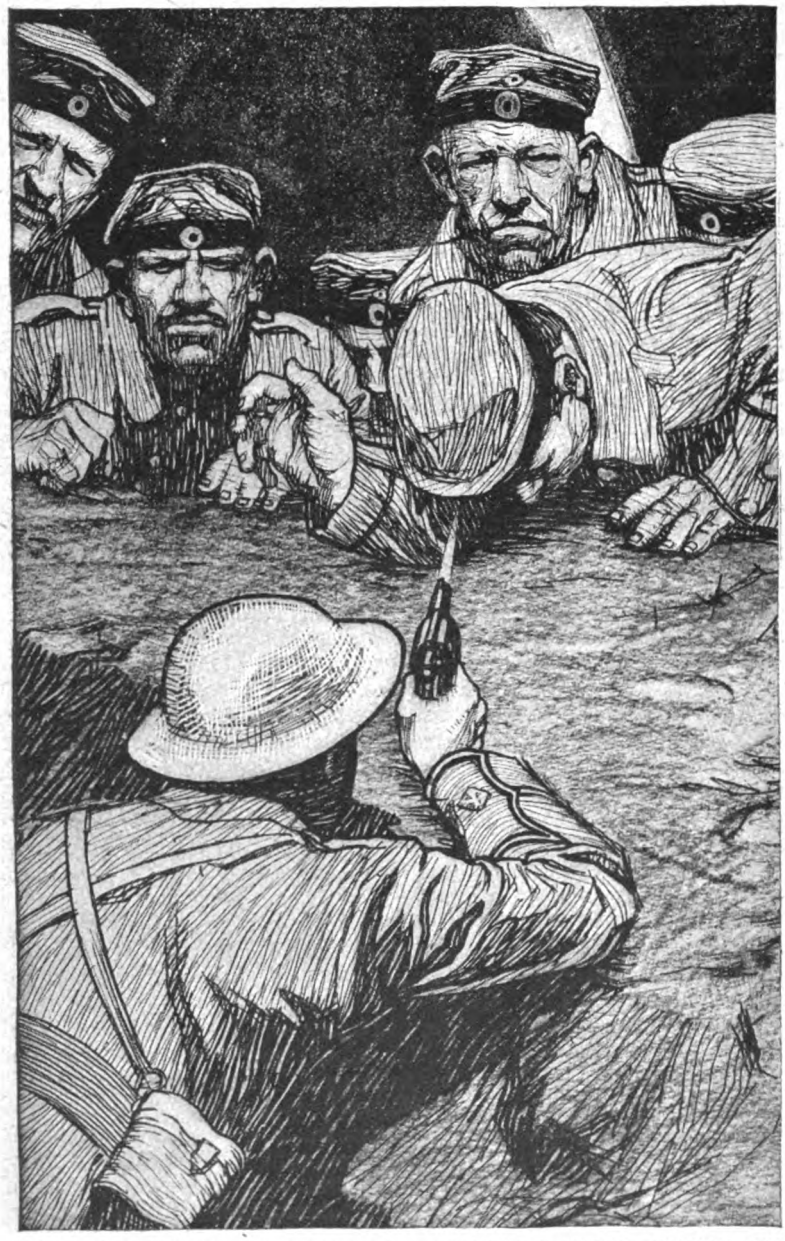
away. As it was, John Brinton, M.C., lieutenant in His Majesty's Regiment of the Royal Loamshires, found himself crouching in a slight dip in the ground and contemplating from a range of four feet no fewer than six Huns similarly engaged. There was the sharp crack of a revolver, a struggle, a muffled cry, then silence. Half-a-dozen more flares went up from each line; everywhere sentries peered earnestly towards the sound of the shot, a few desultory rifles cracked, and then the night resumed its whispering mystery. But at the bottom of the dip five Huns lay on the top of a stunned English officer, while the sixth lay still and twisted, with a revolver bullet in his brain.



"HE FOUND HIMSELF CROUCHING IN A SLIGHT DIP IN THE GROUND AND CONTEMPLATING FROM A RANGE OF FOUR FEET NO FEWER THAN SIX HUNS SIMILARLY ENGAGED."

Twenty minutes afterwards the sergeant, crawling warily on his belly, approached a saphead, and after a brief word or two dropped in.

"'Ave you seen Mr. Brinton, sir?" he asked anxiously of an officer whom he found in the sap, pessimistically smoking a cigarette—saps are pessimistic places.

"No." The officer looked up quickly. "He was out with you, wasn't he, Sergeant Dawson?"

"Yes, sir—on patrol. We'd just a-got to that there chalk 'ummock, when we ran into some of 'em. 'E said to me, 'Get back,' 'e said, 'your own way'; and then they put up a flare. I couldn't see 'im, as I was lying doggo in a 'ole, but I 'eard a revolver-shot about ten yards away. I looked round when the flare was out, but couldn't see him, nor 'ear him. So I thought 'e might 'ave got back."

"Pass the word along for Mr. Brinton." The officer went out of the sap into the

fire-trench. "And get a move on with it." He stood for a few moments looking thoughtful. "I hope," he muttered to himself—"I hope the old boy hasn't been scuppered."

But the old boy *had* been scuppered. A runner failed to discover him in the trench; two strong patrols scoured the ground around the chalk 'ummock and drew blank. And so, in the fullness of time, there appeared in the Roll of Honour the name of Lieutenant John Brinton, of the Royal Loamshires, under the laconic heading of "Missing, believed Prisoner of War"; which is the prologue of this tale of the coalfields of France.

The part of the line in which the Royal Loamshires found themselves at the time of the unfortunate matter of John Brinton, M.C., was somewhere south of La Bassée and somewhere north of Loos—closer identification is undesirable. It is not a pleasant part of the line, though there are many worse. The principal bugbears of one's existence are the tunnelling companies, who without cessation practise their nefarious trade, thereby causing alarm and despondency to all concerned. Doubtless they mean well, but their habit of exploding large quantities of ammonal at uncertain hours and places does not endear them to the frenzied onlookers, who spend the next hour plucking boulders from their eyes. In addition there is the matter of sandbags. The proximity of a mine-shaft is invariably indicated by a young mountain of these useful and hygienic articles, which tower and spread and expand in every direction where they are most inconvenient. I admit that, having placed half the interior of France in bags, the disposal of the same on arriving in the light of day presents difficulties. I admit that the fault lies entirely with the harassed and long-suffering gentleman who boasts the proud title of "spoils officer." I admit——but I grow warm, in addition to digressing unpardonably. Let us come back to our sheep—in this case the Loamshires.

In their part of the front line mining activity was great. A continuous group of craters stretched along No Man's Land, separating them from the wily Hun, for half the battalion front—a group which we will call Outpost. The name is wrong, but it will serve. To the near lips of each crater a sap ran out from the front line, so that merely the great, yawning hole lay between the sap-head and the corresponding abode of the Germans on the other lip. Each night these sap-heads were held by a small group of men armed with Verey lights, bombs, bowie-knives, and other impedimenta of destruction; while between the saps the trench was held but lightly, in some cases not at all. The idea of concentrating men in the front line has long been given up by both sides.

If, therefore, one strolls along the firing-line—a tedious amusement at all times—it is more than likely that one will find long stretches completely deserted. The scene is desolate; the walk is strangely eerie. Walls of sand-bags tower on each side, in some cases two or three feet above one's head; the clouds go scudding by, while the shadows of a traverse dance fantastically as a flare comes hissing down. The Hun is thirty yards away; the silence is absolute; the place is ghostly with the phantoms of forgotten men. And sometimes as one walks strange figures creep into one's brain. Relics of childish fears, memories of the bogey-man who waited round the end of the dark passage at home, come faintly from the past. And, foolish though it be, one wonders sometimes, with a sharp, clutching pang of nervous fear, What is round the next corner?

Nothing—of course not. What should there be? The night is quiet; the trench is English. The next party is forty yards farther on; the voices of the last still come softly through the air. And yet—and yet! But I digress again.

Now, not one of the least of all the crimes of those responsible for the disposal of the underworld of France when it comes to the surface in sand-bags is the following. (Lest anyone may think that I am writing a text-book I would crave patience. The scenery forms an important part of any play.) Be it known, then, that to keep out a bullet some four feet of earth is necessary. Less than that, and the bullet will come through and impinge with great violence on the warrior behind. This fact is well known to all whose path in life leads them to the trenches; but for all that Tommy is a feckless lad. In some ways he bears a marked resemblance to that sagacious bird the ostrich; and because of that resemblance I have remarked on this question of dispersing sand-bags in terms of pain and grief. The easiest thing to do with a sand-bag in a trench if you don't want it is to chuck it out. Human nature being what it is, the distance chucked is reduced to a minimum—in other words, it is placed on the edge of the parapet. More follow, and they are placed beside it on the edge of the parapet; which causes the inside edge of the parapet to increase in height, but

not in thickness. In other words, after a while the top two or three layers of bags, though looking perfectly safe from the inside, are not bullet-proof. Which Tommy knows, but—well, I have mentioned the ostrich.

Now this state of affairs existed in one or two places behind Outpost craters. There were spots where the top of the parapet was not of sufficient thickness to keep out a rifle-bullet. And it was just by one of these spots that the company commander, going round one night, suddenly stumbled on something that lay sprawling at the bottom of the trench—an unmistakable something. It lay half on the fire-step and half off, midway between two saps, and the head sagged back helplessly. He switched on his torch, and, having looked at the huddled form, cursed softly under his breath. For it was his senior subaltern, and a bullet had entered his head from behind just above the neck. It had come out at his forehead, and we will not specify further.

"HE SWITCHED ON HIS TORCH."

"Stretcher-bearers at once." He went back to the group he had just left. "Mr. Dixon has been shot through the parapet. Farther up."

"Killed, sir?" The N.C.O. in charge was in Dixon's platoon.

"Yes." The company officer was laconic. "Brains blown out. It's that infernal parapet—one sand-bag thick! What the blazes's the use of my speaking?"

He had had a trying day and his tone may be excused.

"You sit here and you do nothing. The

whole company are a set of cursed lazy loafers!"

Seeing that the men were getting an average of six hours' sleep, the remark was hardly fair; but, as I said, the day had been a trying one, and this had been the last straw. He strode back again to the dead subaltern, muttering angrily.

"Poor old man," he whispered, gently, lifting the legs on to the fire-step and bending over the still form. "Poor old man, you've solved the Big Mystery by now, anyway." The light of his torch fell on the dead man's face and he shuddered slightly; a bullet can do a lot of damage. Then he climbed on the fire-step and looked over the parapet. It was a place where the spoils party had been particularly busy, and though the company officer was full six foot he could only just see over the top; as a fire-step it was useless to anyone but a giant from a freak show.

"Halloa! What's happened?" A voice behind him made him turn round.

"That you, Dick? Poor little Jerry Dixon's been shot through the parapet—that's what's happened." He got down and stood at the bottom of the trench beside the second-in-command. "The three top layers there are only one bag thick." Once again his language became heated.

"Steady, old man." Dick Staunton puffed steadily at his pipe and looked at the body lying beside them. "Were you with him when he was hit?"

"No. Came round visiting the sentries and found him lying here dead."

"Oh!" He switched on his torch and continued smoking in silence. Suddenly he bent forward and peered closely at the shattered head. "Give me a hand for a minute. I want to turn the boy over."

Faintly surprised, he did as he was bid.

In silence they turned the body over, and again there was silence while Staunton carefully examined the spot where the bullet had entered.

"Strange," he muttered to himself, after a few moments, "very strange. Tell me, Joe"—his voice was normal again—"exactly how did you find him? What position was he in?"

"He was half sitting on the fire-step, with his head in the corner and his legs sprawling in the bottom of the trench."

"Sitting? Then his face was towards you?"

"Why, yes. Is there anything peculiar in the fact? He'd probably just been having a look over the top, and as he turned away to get down he was hit through the sand-bags in the back of the neck. His head was a bit forward as he was getting down, so the bullet passed through his head and out of his forehead."

In silence they turned the boy over again and covered his face with a pocket-handkerchief.

"You're too much of a blooming detective, you know, old man. Much police work has made thee mad," laughed the company commander. "What else can have happened?"

"I'm no detective, Joe." The other man smiled slightly. "But there are one or two small points of detail which strike me, though I can make nothing out of them, I admit. First, his height. He's six inches shorter than you, and yet you could barely see over the top. Therefore, what was he doing trying to look over the parapet here, of all places. Secondly, the way he fell. A man killed instantaneously, and shot through the back of his head, would in all probability pitch forward on his face. You say his face was towards you, and that he was sitting in the corner of the traverse."

He paused to fill his pipe.

"Go on," said the company commander, curiously. "You interest me."

"The third point is one on which I admit that I am doubtful. The bullet wound is clean. Now, I am inclined to think—though I don't know—that a bullet passing through a chalk bag would become jagged, and would not be travelling straight when it continued its flight. However, I don't attach much importance to that. And the fourth and last point is almost too trifling to mention. Do you notice anything peculiar about his uniform?"

The listener flashed his torch over the dead officer. "No," he said, at length. "I can't say that I do. Except that one of his regimental badges is missing. I suppose you don't mean that, do you?" The company officer laughed irritably.

"I do," returned the other, quietly. "It's a point of detail, even if a little one." He looked thoughtfully at the man in front of him. "Do I strike you as a callous sort of devil, old man?"

"You seem to be treating the boy rather on the line of a specimen for improving your detective powers."

"Perhaps you're right." Staunton turned away. "But I didn't mean it that way—quite. Sorry, Joe; the boy was a pal of yours?"

"He was—and a rattling good boy as well."

"God rest his soul." The second-in-command spoke low. Then, with a final salute to the youngster whose soul had gone to the Valhalla of fighting men, he turned away and vanished into the night.

The next day the company commander came round to battalion headquarters.

"My two best subalterns," grunted the colonel in disgust, "within two days. Most annoying. Poor boys—toppers both of them. You'd go quite a way, Dick, before you bettered Brinton and Dixon."

"You would," affirmed the second-in-command. "Quite a way."

"And with all your theorizing last night, old man," remarked the captain, slyly, "we both forgot the obvious solution. He got on the fire-step, found he couldn't see over—so he clambered up on top. Then when he was getting down he was hit, and slithered into the position I found him in."

Staunton regarded the speaker through a haze of tobacco smoke. "I wonder," he murmured at length. "I wonder."

He did not state that during the morning he had made a point of interrogating Jerry Dixon's servant. And that worthy—an old and trusted soldier—had very positively denied that either of the pelicans rampant, which formed the regimental badge, had been missing from his master's coat the previous evening.

"Now, Mr. Brinton's coat, sir," he remarked, thoughtfully, "that did 'ave a badge orf, that did. But 'is servant!" He snorted and dismissed the subject scornfully.

As I say, the major did not mention this fact. After all, it was such a very small point of detail.

To the frivolous-minded Dick Staunton was at times the cause of a certain amount of amusement. Originally in the Army, he had left it when a junior captain, and had settled down to the normal life of a country gentleman. By nature of a silent disposition, he abominated social functions of all sorts. He hunted, he fished, and he shot, and spent the rest of his time studying the habits of the wild. And, as always happens to a man who lives much with Nature, his mind gradually got skilled in the noticing of small things. Little signs, invisible to the casual observer, he noticed automatically; and, without being in any sense a Sherlock Holmes, he had acquired the habit of putting two and two together in a manner that was at times disconcertingly correct.

"Points of detail," he remarked one evening in the dug-out after dinner, "are very easy to see if you have eyes to see them with. One is nothing; two are a coincidence; three are a moral certainty. A really trained man can see a molehill; I can see a mountain; most of you fellows couldn't see the Himalayas." With which sage remark he thoughtfully lit his pipe and relapsed into silence. And silence being his usual characteristic, he came into the battalion headquarters dug-out one evening and dropped quietly into a seat, almost unnoticed by the somewhat noisy group around the table.

"Afternoon, Dickie." The sapper officer looked up and saw him. "D'you hear we're pinching your last recruit? Jesson—this is Major Staunton." He turned to a second lieutenant in the Royal Loamshires beside him as he made the introduction.

"How d'you do, sir?" Jesson got up and saluted. "I've only just got over from England; and now, apparently, they're attaching me to the R.E., as I'm a miner."

He sat down again, and once more turned his attention to that excellent French illustrated weekly without which no officers' mess in France is complete. Lest I be run in for libel, I will refrain from further information as to its title and general effect on officers concerned.

For a few moments Staunton sat watching the group, and listening with some amusement to the criticisms on those lovely members of the fair sex so ably portrayed in its pages, and then his attention centred on the revolver he was cleaning. Jesson, a good-looking, clean-cut man of about twenty-nine or thirty, was holding forth on an experience he had had in Alaska, which concerned a woman, a team of huskies, and a gentleman known as one-eyed Pete, and as he spoke Staunton watched him idly. It struck him that he seemed a promising type, and that it was a pity the Tunnellers were getting him.

"Haven't you got enough disturbers of the peace already," he remarked to the Tunnelling officer, "without snatching our ewe lambs?"

"We are at full strength, as a matter of fact, major," answered an officer covered with chalk; "but they do some funny things in the palaces of the great. We often get odd birds blowing in. I've been initiating him all this morning into the joys of Outpost."

"And how is jolly old Blighty?" remarked the adjutant. "Thank heavens! leave approaches."

"About the same." Jesson helped himself to a whisky and soda. "Darker than ever and taxis an impossibility. Still, I dare say

I shall be glad enough to go back when my first leave comes due," he added, with a laugh.

"Is this your first time out?" asked Staunton.

"Yes." Jesson unbuttoned his Burberry and took out his cigarette-case. Outside the dusk was falling, and he bent forward to get a light from the candle flickering on the table in front of him. "The very first time. I've been on Government work up to now."

It was at that moment that a very close observer might have noticed that Dick Staunton's pipe ceased to draw with monotonous regularity; he might even have heard a quick intake of breath. But he would have had to be a very close one—very close indeed; for the next instant he was again speaking and his voice was normal.

"I suppose you've been at the depot?" he hazarded. "Who are there now?"

"Oh, the usual old crowd," answered Jesson. "I don't expect you know many of them, though, do you, major? Ginger Stretton, in the fourteenth battalion—do you know him by any chance?"

"No—I don't think I do." His face was in the shadow, but had it been visible a slightly puzzled frown might have been seen on his forehead. "I suppose they still make all you fellows on joining go to the regimental tailor, don't they?"

Jesson looked a trifle surprised at the question. "I don't think they are as particular as they were," he returned, after a moment. "Personally I went to Jones and Jones." He casually buttoned up his mackintosh and turned to the Tunneller. "If you're ready, I think we might be going. I want to see about my kit." He got up as he spoke and turned towards the entrance, while at the same moment the sapper rose too. "I'd like to drop in again, sir, sometimes, if I may." He spoke to the shadow where Staunton had been sitting.

"Do." Jesson gave a violent start, for the voice came from just behind his shoulder. Like the hunter he was, Dick Staunton had moved without a sound, and now stood directly between Jesson and the door. "But don't go yet. I want to tell you a story that may amuse you. Have some tea."

"Er—won't it keep till some other time, major? I'm rather anxious to see about my kit."

"Let the kit keep. Sit down and have some tea."

"What the devil has come over you, Dickie?" The adjutant was looking frankly amazed, "You aren't generally so loquacious."

"That's why to-night my little whim must be humoured," answered Staunton, with a slight smile. "Sit down, please, Jesson. It's quite an amusing little yarn, and I would like your opinion on it."

"No hope for you, old boy. Dickie has turned into a social success." The adjutant laughed and lit a cigarette and once again became immersed in his paper.

To the casual observer the scene was a very normal one. Four men in a dug-out, yarning and reading; while outside the occasional whine of a shell, the dirty deeds of a Stokes gun, the noises of the trenches filled the air. Nothing unusual, nothing out of the way except—something, an indefinable something. As the sapper said afterwards, there must have been something intangible in the atmosphere, else why did his pulses quicken? He glanced at the adjutant sitting opposite him, engrossed in his book; he looked at Staunton across the table—Staunton with a slight smile on his lips and his eyes fixed on Jesson; he looked at Jesson beside him—Jesson, whom he had met that morning for the first time. And all he noticed about Jesson was that his left knee twitched ceaselessly.

He ran over in his mind the day's work. He had met him at about eleven that morning wandering along the support line with an officer in the Loamshires whom he knew well, who had hailed him and introduced Jesson.

"A recruit—a new recruit," he had said, "for your atrocious trade. He's just left old pimple-faced Charlie, who was writing returns in triplicate as usual."

Now pimple-faced Charlie was his own major, who habitually did write returns in triplicate; wherefore, after a few remarks of a casual nature, in which he elicited the fact that Jesson was a mining engineer and had suddenly been ordered while waiting at the base to join the 940th Tunnelling Company, he took him in tow and showed him round the mine-galleries.

Mining work was very active in the sector. Four or five small mines and one big one were going up in the near future, so the tour of inspection had been a long one. That his companion was not new to the game was obvious from the outset; and his pertinent inquiries anent cross-cuts, listening galleries, and the whole of the work in hand had shown that he was keen as well. Altogether a promising recruit, he had mused; quite a find, keen and able—two qualities which,

unfortunately, do not go hand in hand quite as often as one would like. And now Staunton and this find of his were facing one another in silence across the plank table of the dug-out: Jesson with an expression of polite indifference, as befitted a subaltern compelled to listen to a senior officer's story which he didn't want to hear; Staunton with an enigmatic smile. Then of a sudden Staunton spoke.

"Have you ever studied the question of the importance of matters of detail, Jesson?" he remarked, quietly, to the impassive figure facing him across the table.

"I can't say that I have, sir," answered the other, politely stifling a yawn.

"You should. A most interesting study. My story concerns points of detail. The imperative thing is to be able to sort out the vital points from all the others; then piece them together and arrive at the right answer."

"It must be very easy to be led astray, I should imagine, and arrive at the—er—wrong one." Jesson concealed a smile, and waited for the major to continue.

"Yes and no. It's all a matter of practice." Staunton's imperturbable voice was as quiet as ever. "And, anyway, it's only in peace time that it matters very much whether one is right or wrong. Nowadays—well, *c'est la guerre!*" He smiled gently. "But my story. I want you as an impartial observer, just arrived, with an unbiased mind, to tell me if you think my joining up of two or three points of detail is a sound one. Both these officers know the points of detail, so your opinion will be more valuable than theirs.

"A few nights ago our battalion had one of those unfortunate little *contretemps* that so often happen in war. A subaltern of ours, John Brinton by name, went out on patrol and never returned. An exhaustive search in No Man's Land failed to discover his body, so we were reluctantly compelled to conclude that he was in German hands; whether alive or dead we don't know. There we have the first fact in my case. Now for the second.

"Two nights after that another of our subalterns was killed in a way which struck me as peculiar. I will not weary you with all the various little points that led me to believe that the bullet which killed him did not come from the trenches opposite; I will merely say that his position, his height, and the depth of the trench were the most obvious. And granted that my conclusions were correct, strange as it might appear at first sight, his death must have been caused at close quarters, possibly in the trench itself."

"Good Lord!" muttered the adjutant, who was now listening with interest. "What do you mean?"

"Two facts, you see," went on Staunton, quietly. "And they would have remained unconnected in my mind—Brinton's capture and Dixon's death—but for a small point of detail. Dixon's jacket was without the left regimental badge when his body was found. His servant knows he had them both earlier in the day. On the contrary, Brinton had lost his left regimental badge for some time. Am I interesting you?"

"Profoundly, thank you, sir." The man opposite smiled amiably.

"I'm glad of that; it's an interesting problem. You see the significance of that small point about the badges; the way in which it connects very intimately Brinton's capture and Dixon's death. So intimately, in fact, does it connect them that one is almost tempted to assume that the man who killed Dixon was the man in possession of Brinton's uniform. Are you with me so far?"

"The evidence seems a trifle slight," remarked Jesson.

"True; but then so much evidence is slight when the criminal is clever. You see, banking on the correctness of the badge deduction, the story, as I construct it, seems feasible. A German who speaks English perfectly is given a nice warm uniform taken from a captured British officer. Then he is told to go over to the British lines and see what he can find out. He comes one night; perfectly easy, no trouble—until walking along the front line he meets another officer—alone; an officer of the same regiment as that whose uniform he is wearing. Unavoidable; in fact, less likely to raise suspicion with the frequent changes that occur if he goes to the same regiment than if he went to another. But something happens: either the other officer's suspicions are aroused, or the German does not wish to be recognized again by him. The trench is quiet; an occasional rifle is going off, so he does the bold thing. He shoots him from point-blank range—probably with a Colt. Then he takes off the dead man's left badge, puts it on his own coat, and disappears for a time. Quite easy, especially when the trenches are old German ones."

"Really, major, you seem to have made a speciality of detective fiction."

As Jesson spoke, his eyes for the first time left the face of the man opposite him and

roved towards the door. For the first time a sudden ghastly suspicion of the truth entered the sapper's brain; and even as it did so he noticed that Staunton's revolver—the cleaning finished—pointed steadily at Jesson's chest.

aware that something unusual was happening, and he suddenly stood up. "What the devil is it, major? What have you got that gun on him for?"

"For fun, dear boy, for fun. It's part of

"STAUNTON'S REVOLVER POINTED STEADILY AT JESSON'S CHEST."

"And the essence of all detective stories is the final clue that catches the criminal, isn't it?" The revolver moved an inch or two further into prominence.

"Good Lord, Dickie! Is that gun of yours loaded?" cried the adjutant, in alarm. And for the first time he also seemed to become

the atmosphere. We've got to the point, haven't we, where—in my story, of course—the German dressed in Brinton's uniform comes into the English lines. Now what sort of a man would they send in this part of the line, where mining activity is great? I continue the theory, you see, that's all."

He looked at Jesson, who made no reply; though without cessation he moistened his lips with his tongue.

"A miner." The adjutant's voice cut in. "Go on, for God's sake."

"Precisely—a miner. The second point of detail, and two points of detail are a strange coincidence—nothing more. Only—there is a third."

"And three are a moral certainty, as you've often said." The adjutant once again bent across the table and spoke softly. "Are you fooling, Dickie—are you fooling? If so the joke has gone far enough."

But the sapper's eyes were fixed on a leg that twitched, and they wandered now and then to a neck where—even in the dim light of a candle—he could see a pulse throbbing—throbbing.

"It's not a joke," he said, and his mouth was dry. "What is the third point of detail, Dickie?"

"Yes, what is the third point of detail, sir?" Jesson's voice was steady as a rock. "I am very interested in your problem." He raised his hands from the table and stretched them in front of him. Not a finger quivered, and with a sublime insolence he examined his nails.

To the sapper there occurred suddenly those lines of Kipling:—

> For there is neither East nor West, border nor breed nor birth,
> When two strong men come face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth.

He *knew* now; he realized the man beside him was a German; he knew that the sentence of death was very near. What the clue was that had given the thing away he hardly thought about—in fact, he hardly cared. All he knew was that death was waiting for the man beside him; and that his hands were steady as a rock.

Quietly Staunton leant forward and undid Jesson's mackintosh. Then he sat back and with his finger he pointed at a spot above his left breast-pocket. "You have never been out to the front, you say; your coat is a new one by Jones and Jones; and yet—until recently—you have been wearing the ribbon of a medal. What medal, Jesson, what medal? It shows up, that clean patch in the light. John Brinton went to Jones and Jones; and John Brinton had a Military Cross."

For a full minute the two men looked into one another's eyes—deep down, and read the things that are written underneath, be a man English or German. Then suddenly Jesson smiled slightly, and spoke.

"You are a clever man, Major Staunton. When will the rifle practice take place?"

Thus it ended, the play of which John Brinton's disappearance formed the prologue. But before the curtain rang down on the epilogue the German told them one or two little things: That John Brinton was alive and well; that the existence of Ginger Stratton, to whom he had alluded so glibly, had only become known to him from a letter in Brinton's coat; that the peculiarities of pimple-faced Charlie had been forced on him by his guide before they met the sapper.

"In fact," as the adjutant remarked, "the fellow was almost too good a sportsman to ——" But that's the epilogue.

A file of men; a watery sun just starting its day's work; a raw, chilly morning. In front—a man—a man with a white disc of paper pinned over the heart.

A word of command; a pushing forward of safety catches; a volley; a finish.

And in a hole in the ground, somewhere near Vermelles, "Jesson," of the Royal Loamshires, attached R.E., lies sleeping the last great sleep.

IS SIR OLIVER LODGE RIGHT?

"YES."
By A. Conan Doyle.

"NO."
By Edward Clodd.

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.
Photo, Elliott & Fry.

SIR OLIVER LODGE.
Photo Swaine.

Is Sir Oliver Lodge right in his opinion that the Dead can communicate with the Living? Most of our readers have formed their own opinions, but nevertheless they will be interested in reading what is to be said for and against by two such eminent writers as Sir A. Conan Doyle and Mr. Edward Clodd.

"YES."

By A. CONAN DOYLE.

HAVE read Sir Oliver Lodge's statement of the causes which led him to believe in the continuity of life and the possibility of communication. I find myself in complete agreement with it, because my own experiences, which now extend over thirty years, are corroborative of his own, though I freely admit that I have never had the same application in examining phenomena, nor the same power of scientific analysis with which to weigh the results. Still, so far as I have been able to go, I have found the road even as he describes it, and as many other travellers who are men of conscience and character have told the same story I cannot doubt that it is true. If human testimony is capable of establishing anything, then it has absolutely proved the fact of survival. If anyone thinks that I exaggerate, let him before expressing his thought read the following books in the

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order given: Lodge's "Survival of Man," Hill's "Psychical Investigations," Stead's "After Death," Lodge's "Raymond." No course of reading will profit them more, and when inquirers have finished it they will be in a position to dissent or to agree. At present it is too often an argument where knowledge and experience are on one side while nothing but prejudice or misunderstanding is on the other.

Of all these misunderstandings none is more common or more false than the idea that the future of religion is in some way imperilled. Spiritualism will destroy no existing religion, but it will enrich and revive each and all of them. It will assuredly modify details and call attention to the essential things which all hold in common, rather than to the less essential things upon which they differ. To that extent it may offend extremists. "It will be a new kind of Christianity," said the Bishop of Oxford the other day, in the course of an attack upon it. That does, I think, fairly well describe it; but surely the whole earnest world is looking for a new kind of Christianity which will get more of the real spirit of the Founder, and make impossible for ever such frightful relapses into the Dark Ages as that which our generation has witnessed. So long as the churches are half empty all over the land, it is a new sort of Christianity that is called for. Here we have something definite, something assured, something which will be based upon tangible proof and will combine the most advanced science with the most exalted morality. Such is the spiritual movement as I read it—a fresh influx of inspiration, and far the greatest religious event since the coming of that Great Spirit Who brought, nearly two thousand years ago, the message of gentleness and tolerance from which the world seems to have profited so little.

These remarks, however, may be too grave for these pages. Let me then imitate Sir Oliver and go back in my own memory to some of the stages and experiences which have brought me where I am. My training was most orthodox in the least elastic of all churches, but after becoming a medical student I found such discrepancies between the new knowledge and the old teaching that my views were greatly changed. Truth at all cost was my motto, and I groped my way through some years of inquiry and doubt towards some definite conclusion. Alas! that conclusion was only negative, although I never ceased to be a whole-hearted Theist, seeing signs of divine purpose all around me. That the purpose included the prolongation of my own minute personality after death seemed to me to be entirely unlikely and against the whole analogy of Nature, so far as I could understand it. The bodily senses gave us all our impressions. How then could the body die and the impressions survive? As well have the electricity going on when the battery was smashed.

Then came my years of reconsideration, amazed and reluctant reconsideration, which gradually, very gradually, changed to absolute conversion as the evidence became stronger and my knowledge fuller. I was an omnivorous reader, and I chanced upon a biography of a Judge Edmonds, of the United States High Court, in which that eminent lawyer claimed to have kept in close personal touch with his wife for many years after her death. I read the book with the pity which the words of a well-meaning lunatic would inspire. Only one thing puzzled me. Was the man really mad, or was he for some reason lying? The account was very circumstantial, and there could be no question of mistake.

My knowledge of the subject at the time was confined to Browning's "Sludge," and to occasional police reports of the exposure of fraudulent mediums. I thought the whole ritual consisted of dark séances, floating tambourines, and absurd messages got by very dubious means. The association of our beloved dead with such phenomena seemed impossible, and I could not understand how men of education could believe such nonsense. I tried some table-turning, and got the usual banal messages. This deepened my distrust of the whole subject. If spirits do exist, I thought, they must be something superhuman, whereas these creatures who send such messages, if they really come from outside ourselves, must rather be subhuman. I thought I had the scientific mind, and yet I was really doing, as many of my superiors in science were doing, the most unscientific thing possible, for I was arguing from a supposition instead of from a fact. My duty was not to imagine a spirit and then judge the messages by that imaginary standard, but it was to study the messages, presuming that they were genuine, and endeavour to learn the nature of those who sent them.

I learned about this time that a considerable number of eminent men had given their endorsement to these phenomena, and this perplexed me, for I was aware that their belief had only come after close investigation. I read Wallace's "Modern Miracles," and an epitome of Crookes' experiments as published in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*. Here were two men who were unsurpassed, the one as

a zoologist, the other as a chemist, and they were both convinced. But I do not readily surrender my opinions. I preferred to imagine that these two eminent men had some blind spot in their mental retina. I could not believe in life without a physical basis. In this I was probably right, but my definition of what is physical was too narrow.

About this time I came into personal contact with General Drayson, one of the pioneers of this movement in England. He was a man of great force of character and with a singular gift of clear exposition. He gave me an interview, in which I laid some at least of my difficulties before him. I still remember the clever analogies with which he tried to clear my mind. "You complain of the low level of spiritual messages," he said. "Are you aware that death causes no change in the character, and that so long as a stream of very undeveloped people are passing from this world the population of the next will contain these folk? It is they with whom you have been in touch. If a man shut himself in his house in this world all his life, and then in middle age for the first time put his head out of the window, it is probable that his first experience of the outer world might be some rude remark from a passing guttersnipe. If he withdrew his head, shut the window, and argued that the outer world was a very low-down place which contained nothing but guttersnipes, he would argue as wisely as you are doing. What you have to do is to go farther and see whether you cannot get in touch with things higher, not lower, than yourself. If you are worthy it will be given to you."

On many other points General Drayson instructed me. I was interested but not convinced by his remarks. I continued to sit at private circles, however, where we got messages, some of which seemed to be deliberately false, while some were striking and elevated. We were working without paid assistance, which secures one against the trickery of an evil medium, but deprives one of the essential help of a good one.

At this stage came two new factors. The first was that I joined, and closely followed the work of, the Psychical Society. The other, the publication of that great root-book, "Human Personality," in which Myers summed up the subject and systematized a new science. One fact emerged from his researches and was recognized by every mind open to evidence. It was the certainty of telepathy, or the action of mind upon mind at a distance, which henceforth was generally accepted. I also could not help accepting it, and I confirmed it by some personal experiments. But here was a breach in my wall, for if my spirit here can influence my brother in China, then spirit has certain properties which are distinct from physical matter as we understand it. And if it can operate so far from the body, may it not also operate when the body has ceased to be? Once grant telepathy, and one has made a step which leads more than half-way to the recognition of survival. No mere analogy of wireless telegraphy will help where, as is so often recorded, the figure of the distant communicator as well as his message is impressed upon the recipient.

Thus it took me many years to get as far as telepathy. Many more had passed before I could feel that I was sure about survival and communication. I could have reached conviction much earlier had I used the recognized methods. An astronomer who discards a telescope may expect to be handicapped. I pushed caution to an excess. Since then, however, I have had personal experiences which I will not enter into at present which leave no doubt in my mind. It is treacherous and difficult ground, where fraud lurks and self-deception is possible and falsehood from the other side is not unknown. There are set-backs and disappointments for every investigator. But if one picks one's path one can win through and reach the reward beyond—a reward which includes great spiritual peace, an absence of fear in death, and an abiding consolation in the death of those whom we love. It is, I repeat, this religious teaching which is the great gift that has been granted in our time. So long as a man can refer to his witnesses and their testimony, I can see no reason why he may not adopt it and enjoy it without such first-hand experience as may take a lifetime to acquire. There is no necessity for every man to blaze his own trail. All other religious systems have come from the East. Here at last is one from the West, not supplanting but clarifying and strengthening the others. It is the very special glory of England that she has done far more than any other country to rescue this system from being a mere playing with *Poltergeists*, and to dignify it into a scientific philosophy. Myers, Gurney, Hodgson, Crookes, Wallace, Stead—and, may I add, Oliver Lodge—are names which will be for ever associated with it. The last inspiration took three centuries for its acceptance. Where will this one be three centuries from now?

"NO."

By EDWARD CLODD,

Author of "Myths and Dreams," "The Story of Creation," etc.

EDWARD CLODD.
Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

WHEN our "blank misgivings" yield to assurance that light has come to us on the problems of life and destiny, we incline to banish reluctance to bare the secrets of the soul to our fellows; desire and duty alike impel us to tell others by what steps we have secured a satisfaction which it is our joy to share. Hence, many will be grateful to Sir Oliver Lodge for breaking through a natural reserve to tell them how he has attained assurance that life—of "vague and indeterminate kind," though he admits it to be—continues beyond the grave; assurance that personality and memory persist, and that it is possible, in certain circumstances, to hold converse with, or to receive messages from, "the departed." This assurance, he tells us, rests "on a basis of fact and experience."

Experience must be ruled out in the inquiry; it is wholly personal. A man tells us that he thinks this and feels that, and regulates his attitude accordingly; but the experiential is not the evidential; it cannot be matter for experiment, and lies outside the province of scientific inquiry. Theories broached by scientists can be proved or disproved by observation and testing; and, dismissing Sir Oliver's "experience," we can deal only with the "fact" on which that experience ultimately rests.

He tells us that the primary impulse towards his conviction that the soul is immortal came from some investigations into the validity of so-called "thought-transference" in 1883-84, the result of which was to satisfy him that there is, in certain persons, perhaps, he says, derived from "animal ancestry," a hitherto unrecognized faculty making possible what is called "telepathy," or communication between mind and mind without the intervention of the material channel of the senses. The evidence of that faculty is denied by the majority of men of science. Sir Ray Lankester and Sir H. B. Donkin, among these, affirm that "telepathy is simply a boldly-invented word for a supposed phenomenon which has never been demonstrated; an unfair and unwarranted draft on the credit of science which its signatories have not met by the assignment of any experimental proofs." Dr. Milnes Bramwell says that "after twenty years' search after evidence in its favour the results have been invariably negative." It is in the coincidental that the telepathic assumption has found its warrant; since, as Bacon acutely puts it in his "Essay on Prophesies," "first that men marke when they hit and never marke when they misse." So much, then, for the basal "fact" on which Sir Oliver builds a fragile structure.

Following on this preliminary inquiry, he joined the Society for Psychical Research, bringing thereto a mind "open to evidence." This evidence was, in the main, furnished by a medium, Mrs. Piper, who came here from that land of "many inventions" and market of medium-supply, America. The result of numerous sittings with her in her trance-state, or out of it, was to convince him that her organism was the vehicle of communications from the departed, conveying facts known or unknown, the latter being subsequently verified. While he pours encomiums on her, and will not admit "an iota of fraud" in her, he betrays a certain uneasiness, because "sometimes the alien body seemed intractable and lucidity was unattainable." Guilelessly he gives his case away when he suggests what, as will be seen presently, others found to be the fact, that there was sometimes "guessing on the part of the control"—*i.e.*, the second personality through whom the spirit communicates with the inquirer. At a séance there are, at least, four characters: (1) the inquirer, (2) the medium, (3) the control, (4) the spirit; and, in my belief, the last "three are one." The controls, anyway, are a very mixed lot, ranging from philosophers and parsons to little Indian girls and charwomen, and, as spiritualists admit, the inquirer cannot be sure, when he desires to be put into touch with a discarnate relative or friend, that some tricky spirit may not

personate them. Is this among the " facts " whereon conviction rests ? Sir Oliver tells the truth, but not the whole truth ; he suppresses what candour should have included. In 1894 he attended séances given by a Neapolitan medium, Eusapia Palladino, at the house of Professor Richet on the Ile Roubaud, near Hyères. His verdict was that the woman's performances were due to supernormal agency ; in the movements of chairs and other objects not near her he saw evidences of a " scientifically unrecognized truth." In 1895 she was brought to Cambridge, and detected by Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Maskelyne as a vulgar trickster. Of course, Sir Oliver had to admit that he had been hoodwinked, and in the *Daily Chronicle* of November 5th, 1895, he expressed his regret that " on the strength of a few exceptionally good sittings [*i.e.*, when Eusapia was at her best in " deceiving the very elect "] he had made a report testifying to her genuineness." If an Italian peasant-woman could thus humbug this distinguished physicist, why not also the more astute American, Mrs. Piper ? Here is what a group of competent, unprejudiced witnesses testify concerning that medium. Sir George Darwin : " Almost every statement made by Mrs. Piper could have been given if she could have discovered my name [which, unknown to him, she had done]. I remain wholly unconvinced either of any remarkable powers or of thought-transference." Dr. Lund : " She rarely told me anything of importance right off the reel, but carefully fished, and then followed up a lead. . . . In some points she was entirely out of it." The late Professor William James (the eminent psychologist) : " I was too disgusted with Phinuit's [Mrs. Piper's chief ' control '] tiresome twaddle even to note it down." Dr. Walter Leaf : " Several instructive instances point directly against any knowledge derived from the spirits of the dead. The effect which a careful study of all the reports of the English sittings has left on my mind is that Phinuit is only a name for Mrs. Piper's secondary personality." Professor MacAlister : " Mrs. Piper is quite wide-awake enough all through to profit by suggestion. . . . If you ask my private opinion, it is that the whole thing is an imposture, and a poor one." Andrew Lang : " She exhibits a survival of recrudescence of savage phenomena, real or feigned, of convulsion and sensory personality." Added to this, Mrs. Piper, in October, 1901, made a confession denying that she had had any communications from the departed when she was in the trance-state. She afterwards recanted, and a defender of the faith explained that her " statement represented simply a transient mood." But the fact of the confession remains, and the transient, probably, was the true. Let Sir Oliver and the rest of the credulous explain it as they may or can ; ingenuity will never fail them.

The phenomena of Spiritualism—Spiritism it should, more correctly, be called—are twofold : physical and psychical ; but they are, more or less, intermingled. The physical include raps, table-turning, slate-writing, materialization, and photographing, of spirits, mediums floating in the air, or prolongating their bodies, and all the apparatus of ghosts and haunted houses. The psychical includes clairvoyancy, crystal-gazing, telepathy, hallucinations and the trance-state, and automatic writing of mediums. It has much in common with Theosophy and Christian Science—twin delusions.

As a modern movement, Spiritualism began in America in 1848. Its inception was in fraud, and a tainted atmosphere has clung round it from that time to the present. Its history is a record of the detection and confession, one after another, of a pack of sorry rascals of both sexes, some of whom have been committed to prison as rogues and vagabonds. The list is too long to be quoted here. At the start the tricks were chiefly of the horse-play sort, many of the performers being of neurotic type, mingled with cunning, like the appropriately-named Fox girls, with whom the movement began, and who, ultimately, confessed the fraud. Rappings and table-tiltings still hold a place, but the other physical manifestations have vanished ; the larger number of spiritualists are, discreetly, silent about them. It is not convenient to recall the fact—not an isolated instance—that the distinguished physicist, Sir William Crookes, averred that he had seen the spirit of one Katie King at a séance given by Miss Florence Cook at his house in May, 1874, the same Florence Cook having been seized by the hand and waist when personating Katie by a Mr. Volckman *five months before* Sir William told his wonderful story !

As for spirit-photographs, although the method by which these are faked has been admitted by their producers, their genuineness still finds defenders in men even of the intelligent type of Mr. Edward Carpenter, who adds to his gullibility acceptance of the statement of an American doctor that he has proved the existence of the soul because he finds a decrease of weight of from half an ounce to an ounce in the body

when placed in the scales at the moment of death.

It is with the psychical phenomena that spiritualists are now mainly concerned, and when we examine the materials for belief in, and knowledge of the conditions under which the departed exist in, another life, which these supply, one is staggered that minds of lofty conceptions and ideals can build on them the superstructure of personal immortality. From the enormous mass of communications purporting to come from discarnate spirits not an ennobling nor high-toned message can be extracted; all, all is nauseating, frivolous, mischievous, spurious drivel. Through his control, a little Indian girl, Feda, Raymond Lodge tells his father that the houses in the Beyond are made "from sort of emanations from the earth"; that his white robe is "made from decayed worsted on your side"; that he has his "little doggie" with him; that cigars made "out of essences and ethers and gases" are provided for smokers, and "whisky-sodas" for drinkers! Faugh!

One damning fact must be added. Mr. Myers, the apostolic chief of the "new revelation," as Sir Conan Doyle rhetorically called it when reviewing "Raymond," left behind him, in the custody of the Society for Psychical Research, a sealed letter, the test of his survival being that its contents should tally with a message which he would send from the spirit-world. When, on December 13th, 1904, the seal was broken, there was found to be no resemblance between those contents and a communication given in a script which an automatist, Mrs. Verrall, was supposed to have received from the discarnate Myers. A like failure attended the case of one Hannah Wild, an American discarnate spirit. Yet the game goes on merrily; the "new revelation" is accepted as supplemental to, or even superseding, the "old."

To what manifold causes can we trace these delusions of men who, followed as authorities in expert matters, are, therefore, looked up to as authorities on everything else? "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

Not on fact, but on sentiment; not on reason, but on emotion, do these delusions build their unstable foundations. Impelled by the wish to believe, the dupes attend séances by mediums, who, like the spirits they pretend to represent, "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." The bias-ruled attitude of the inquirers is wholly uncritical; the power of suggestion paralyzes them; they are prepared to see and hear and believe all that they are told, and the insatiate appetite for the marvellous is satisfied to repletion. All this is emphasized when the sorrowing and the bereaved seek consolation from those to whom they pay their fees to obtain it. Applicable to-day is the shrewd comment made by Reginald Scot three hundred and thirty years ago in his "Discoverie of Witchcraft." Speaking of Saul's visit to the Witch of Endor, he says: "He that looketh into it advisedlie shall see that Samuel was not raised from the dead, but that was an illusion or cousenage practised by the witch."

To the question, "Is Sir Oliver Lodge right?" the emphatic answer is, *No!*

SAVE THE BABIES!

THE First of July will witness the opening of National Baby Week, a week during which great efforts will be made throughout the land to bring vividly before the public mind the tremendous and solemn responsibility for the proper care of infants, which rests not on mothers only, but also on the community at large.

Our hearts are saddened beyond expression by the appalling and growing wastage of war. But while war counts its victims by thousands, dirt, disease, and ignorance number theirs by tens of thousands. In four years England and Wales lost nearly 800,000 babies by death alone, while a far larger number began life crippled and incapacitated in mind and body owing to enervating environment and inefficient supervision. It is a national duty to save these helpless infants, rescue them from a doom of misery, and fit them, mentally and physically, to become vigorous, capable citizens.

In the United States of America, where the problem is far less acute, much has been done to check infant mortality. The conscience of England needs only to be aroused to ensure still greater results. Various societies are at work, but let no one imagine enough is being done while so many little ones die in infancy.

Will you help to forward the cause, first, financially; secondly, by making known to your friends the vitally important aims of the National Baby Week Council; and thirdly, by enrolling yourself at 6, Holles Street, Oxford Street, W., as a recruit in this great campaign to SAVE THE BABIES?

THE MYSTERY OF SALLY.

By CHARLES SLOAN REID.

Illustrated by Thomas Henry.

SALLY was a nurse girl, the seventeenth since the baby came, about thirteen months before. But we realized that at last we had found a treasure. Sally was inventive. The kaleidoscopic repertoire of amusement which she furnished for our tootsy-wootsy was something to command the admiration of the most callous-brained pessimist who never smiled.

This aggregation of inventive genius had been purchased at a weekly instalment of sixteen shillings. Cheerfully we should have made it a pound on demand within a week after her arrival.

But Sally seemed to be devoid of the contamination of bribery, and, indeed, she spent her money like a lord, more than half of her weekly pay going for things of one kind or another for the amusement of our little one. A bus ride to the park every day for the pleasure of our baby formed one of her personal extravagances. Baby soon became so much attached to her that mamma was no longer interesting.

One thing soon became apparent. Sally had the going-out habit. She wanted to be away from the house more than half the time, but, as our loved one always came back from these little excursions in excellent spirits, and, barring the harassing fears that baby might contract some of the many contagious or infectious diseases of childhood, this habit of Sally's was not at all inconvenient to the household.

Another thing which recommended Sally was the habitual neatness of her person, and what became an interesting mystery to us was the matter of how she could spend from eight to twelve shillings per week solely and unselfishly for the amusement of our little one, and dress herself with such taste on the remainder.

Finally, we decided that Sally must be getting credit somewhere, and that we should raise her wages in order that she might be enabled to meet her obligations.

But about this time I saw Sally emerging from a bank one day. I was some distance away and unobserved by her.

"Ah," I exclaimed under my breath, "she is borrowing of the bank."

The cashier of this bank was a particular friend of mine, and I determined to learn something of Sally's financial operations. This I had no trouble in doing, and soon learned to my amazement that Sally was not a borrower, but a depositor, to the extent of eight or ten pounds a week.

My wife and I held a consultation over the matter, for the mystery had deepened. Why one who could indulge the daily extravagances of Sally, and yet deposit eight pounds per week, should hire herself out at a wage of sixteen shillings, was amazingly mysterious—and yet Sally was not a thief. Not the smallest item of anything of value had been missed from the house, and no coins or notes were ever kept about the place.

So the mystery of Sally deepened. But, notwithstanding this, Sally was by incalculable odds the best nurse we ever had possessed, or ever could hope to have, and we determined that nothing should dispossess us of her services—no, not if it became necessary to raise her wages to two pounds per week, which extravagance I could ill afford.

So Sally remained, keeping up her usual programme, only inventing new means of amusement every day. How long we should have kept her I do not know. But accident plays a large part in the movement of human affairs, and it was an accident which led to the separation of our Sally from us.

An *employé* from our mills had been seriously crushed in a dray collision in the East-end, and I had gone over to investigate the responsibility for the accident. This matter being soon concluded, I was returning

to the office, when I met Jenkins, a friend of mine. Jenkins likes a circus performance better than anything; and the district was noted for its attraction for showmen of one kind or another.

"Halloa, old man!" called Jenkins from across the street; "wait a moment."

I waited, and Jenkins came over.

"Do you know," he began, "I have found one of the finest artists in the show line down here that I've seen for a long while."

"What's his branch?" I asked.

"Wild-animal tamer, and he has been playing to crowded houses here for the past six weeks. You ought to see this, especially the afternoon performance, at which he gives an extraordinary feature."

He was leading, and we soon came to the entrance way of a large tent which occupied a portion of the area usually taken up by the showmen. Outside were a number of big posters announcing, both by word and illustration, the wonderful feats performed by the man inside, among them being one which was especially horrifying—this being announced in big letters as the special afternoon feature. Jenkins had secured tickets, and was hurrying me inside.

Our seats proved to be in a good position, and we had not long to wait for the beginning of the show. The performer appeared in the caged arena, and the various features of the programme were soon passing before us. Tigers, leopards, and lions, one after another, had been introduced, and at last King Leo, a tremendous lion, stood beside his master in the arena.

"Now we get the star performance," whispered Jenkins.

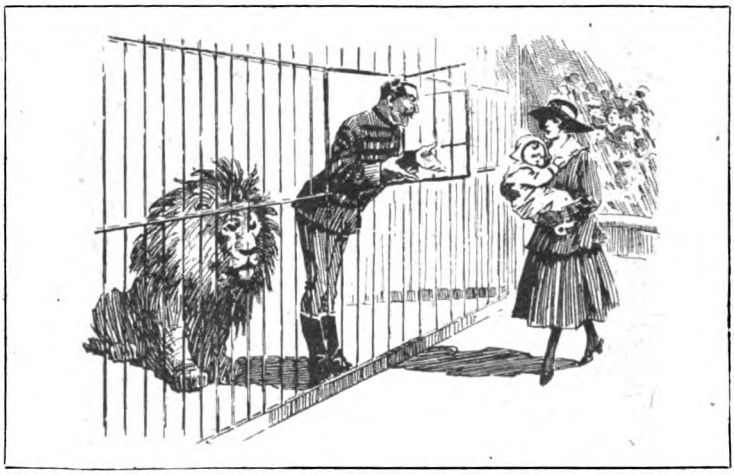
The showman advanced to the front of the cage, where he opened a small wicket window.

"Now," he began, "if some mother in the audience will bring me her baby for a few moments, I will show you that Leo will hold the little one in his great mouth as tenderly as its mother can hold it in her arms. Trust me, some mother—your little one shall receive no harm whatever."

"We have only to wait a moment," declared Jenkins. "There is a young woman in the audience who furnishes the baby every afternoon; and Torrelli, the showman, pays her two pounds after every performance."

"Horror!" I exclaimed.

And just at this moment the young woman arose from somewhere near the front and advanced, with the baby in her arms. I got one glimpse of them—and the next instant I was on my feet. The woman was our Sally—*and the baby was our boy!*



"THE YOUNG WOMAN AROSE FROM SOMEWHERE NEAR THE FRONT AND ADVANCED, WITH THE BABY IN HER ARMS."

I summoned strength enough to rush into the ring, and the man who was not afraid of the whole African jungle cowered before my eye. In the meantime I somehow reached the side of Sally and seized the boy in my arms, allowing her to make a precipitate exit.

No doubt she is now working her scheme in some other city where Torrelli is showing. And we—well, we are no longer requiring the services of a nurse. Also, we are seriously thinking of calling our boy Daniel, for reasons which the reader will have little difficulty in guessing.

Red Cross Magazines.

By FREDERICK DOLMAN.

HISTORY is being made in all sorts of ways during the wonderful times in which we live, and it is not all written in the newspapers. One of the by-products, so to speak, of the great war which will tell much to the future generations as to the spirit in which Britons suffered and endured its travail is the military hospital magazine. The first of these remarkable periodicals, which are almost entirely written and illustrated by wounded soldiers, was published at the Craigleith Hospital, Edinburgh, in December, 1914. During the intervening period others have been produced and regularly published every month at military hospitals in London (Wandsworth and Denmark Hill), Birmingham, Cambridge, and Plymouth.

The irrepressible good spirits of the men maimed and broken in the war have been a constant source of admiration and amazement. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that humour is the predominant note of these military hospital magazines. There is pathos too, here and there, but the lugubrious feeling usually associated with a hospital of any kind is wholly absent from letterpress and illustrations alike. Patients, nurses, and doctors see day by day around them the concentrated tragedy of the war, but it is comedy, not tragedy, which is reflected in these pages of merry jest and droll story, playful cartoon and vivacious caricature.

WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'D LIKE TO START AN OFFENSIVE AGAIN.—By Capt. Bruce Bairnsfather.

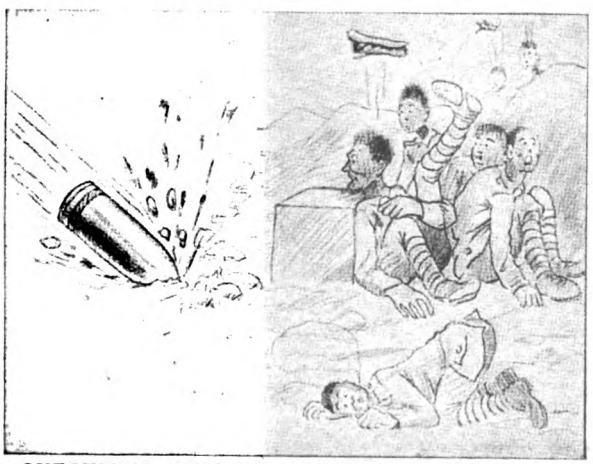
WHEN THE TWO HUNDREDTH MAN OF THIS SORT COMES UP AND ASKS YOU FOR: YOUR NAME, YOUR AGE, YOUR NEXT OF KIN, HOW LONG IN THE ARMY; DO YOU KEEP WHITE MICE, IF NOT, WHY NOT, ETC., ETC., ETC.

From "The Fourth."

The military hospitals, with patients and staff, number their inmates by the thousands, and form little worlds of their own, whose daily life is mirrored for us with vivid detail in these magazines. Everything is faithfully recorded, and we get an impression of strenuous work interspersed with constant outings and entertainments

THE SPRUCERS.—By C. R. W. Nevinson.
A REMINISCENCE OF WORK WITH THE FATIGUE PARTY IN CARRYING HUGE BALES OF SUPPLIES FOR THE DISPENSARY.
From "The Gazette of the 3rd London General Hospital."

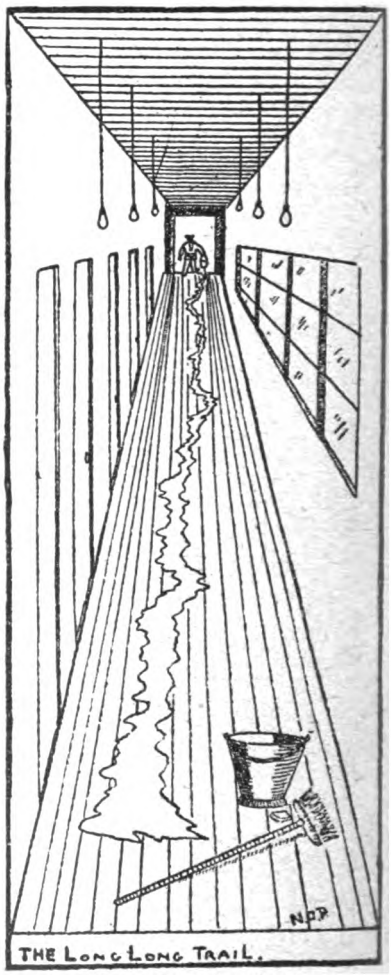
for the patients. We are introduced in turn to all the functionaries having a part in the working of the hospital—surgeons and matrons, nurses and orderlies, porters, gatekeepers, and charwomen — and have revealed to us the relations existing between them. But it is all done with banter and badinage suggestive



QUESTIONS OF THE HOUR—WILL IT BURST?
From "The Fourth."

of a "happy family," such as is rarely to be found in normal life. If there is one of these magazines which could be described as really serious in tone, it is the one representative of Scotland published at Craigleith, the solid dignity of its

POPULAR SONGS ILLUSTRATED.



From "The Southern Cross."

format, probably, assisting this impression. For irresponsible levity, on the other hand, the palm must, perhaps, be given to the *Gazette* of the Third London General Hospital, at Wandsworth.

It is evident that these magazines and the enforced leisure which it is mainly their purpose to beguile have been the means of eliciting some amount of dormant and

unsuspected literary and artistic talent. On the other hand, three of them have enjoyed the assistance of able professional artists whose lot happened to be cast for a time in the hospitals with which they are associated. During the few weeks last summer he was a patient at the Fourth London General Hospital, Denmark Hill, the inimitable Captain Sprucers," a reminiscence of his work with the "fatigue party" in carrying huge bales of supplies for the dispensary, is the outcome of his experiences in both capacities. For the same magazine Private J. H. Dowd, who before the war was favourably known as a black-and-white artist, has been a host in himself, contributing several pencil drawings

DEPARTMENTAL PEEPS.—By J. H. Dowd.

OUR ARTIST HAS BEEN MAKING A TOUR OF THE 3RD LONDON GENERAL HOSPITAL, AND PRESENTS US WITH THE ABOVE MORE OR LESS AUTHENTIC DELINEATIONS OF THE WORK CARRIED OUT IN THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS.

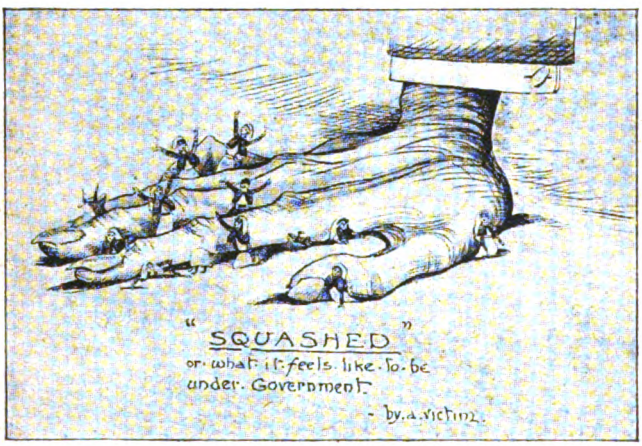
From "The Gazette of the 3rd London General Hospital."

Bruce Bairnsfather produced a page cartoon for its magazine, *The Fourth*. Similarly C. R. W. Nevinson, the "Futurist" artist, contributed several characteristic sketches to the *Gazette* of the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth. "Private" Nevinson was twice an inmate of this institution, first as an "orderly" and then as a patient—probably a unique occurrence—and his drawing here reproduced, "The

of rich humour to every number. Gunner William Forrest has been of equal service to the *Craigleith Hospital Chronicle*, for most of whose numbers he made drawings until his departure from the hospital last December. It should be added, however, that quite as interesting in their way are the contributions of wounded "Tommies," whose work appears "in print" for the first time, specimens of which are reproduced in these pages.

As regards the literary contents of the magazines, two or three quotations must suffice to indicate their quality. Anecdotes of hospital life form an attractive feature in most of them. Here are two samples from the *Gazette* of the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth :—

"There was a cheery Canadian in one of the wards the other day who rather went to prove that humour is very much alive amongst the wounded. The poor fellow had been caught in the head by shrap., and he lay in his cot with bandages over his skull and round his forehead and under his chin. There came along a well-intentioned lady visitor, who plumped herself into a chair by the bedside and said, 'Were you wounded in the head, my brave man?' 'Oh, no, ma'am,' replied Tommy, with fine sarcasm; 'I was wounded in the foot, but the bandage has slipped up.'"



From "The Southern Cross."

OUR NEW V.C.

LADY VISITOR: "What battle were you in, my good man?"

CAPTAIN OF THE COMPANY XI.: "The Final for the Battalion Cup, madam!"

From "4th Southern General Hospital Gazette."

"If we had permission to mention the name of the doctor concerned in this story, no one who knows Harley Street would be surprised at the chuckles of joy with which it was told in the officers' mess of the Third.

SISTER: "You need feeding up."
PATIENT: "I'm fed up already."

From "The Gazette of the 3rd London General Hospital."

"A newly-arrived patient, with a bullet wound in the arm, was being examined by the said doctor, who is one of the most distinguished ornaments of our *à la suite* staff. 'That's all right', said the doctor; 'I'll have you well again soon.'

"'Thank you,' replied the patient, 'but I was going to ask permission to go out and see a specialist about it!'"

From the *Craigleith Hospital Chronicle* we take a clever parody of the German "Hymn of Hate," written by a patient of the "Z" ward adopting the pseudonym of "Pipsqueak":—

Pints of milk and soup made hot,
We love them not, we hate them not.
Of all the drinks upon the slate
There's only one we loathe and hate,
We love a hundred, we hate but one
With a hate more hot than the hate of the Hun—
Castor Oil!

It is known to you all, it is known to you all,
It casts a gloom and it casts a pall
Over every one of the officers' mess,
The one repast they could do with less.
Come, let us go to the trysting-place
An oath to register, face to face.
We will never forego our hate
Of the horror which haunted us early and late,
Of that loathsome drink with its tragic taste
By each and all of us frequently faced—
Castor Oil!

Pints of milk and soup made hot,
We love them not, we hate them not;
They're given to us to make us well,
They do not possess a taste like—France;
But this will we hate with a lasting hate
And never will we that hate abate.
Hate of all men from "A" Ward to "Z,"
From shy V.A.D. to O.C. at the head,
Hate of the night right up to reveillé,
Hate of the head and hate of the belly;
We love a hundred, we hate but one,
And that we will hate till our life is done—
Castor Oil!

THE PRICE OF FIVE HUNDRED

By

L. J. Beeston

Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

AS Frank Wilson, golf clubs slung over shoulder, ran up Tremorro's stairs and banged at Tremorro's door, he heard a sound of some hurried, agitated movement inside the room. He grasped the handle of the door, but desisted for a second while he called out in his breezy fashion :—

"Come, come! Get busy. Time for just one round before lunch."

Then he entered. He saw instantly that something had happened to Tremorro, who was limp as an empty sack in his chair, his arms hanging either side of it, his head drooping listlessly.

"Charles!" Wilson rapped out in keen alarm. Getting no answer, he let his irons fall clanking to the carpet, and hurried to the inert form of his friend. "Good heavens, old man, what's amiss?"

Tremorro lifted a heavy head, a lifeless pair of eyes.

"Sit down," said he, in a dull voice. "I'm in trouble; in ghastly trouble. Close the door. Did I say trouble?" He uttered a hard laugh high up in his throat, as if the word mocked him by its inadequacy. "The fact is I'm pushed to the final extreme."

Wilson came back from shutting the door. He planted himself opposite his friend and regarded him with frowning, sombre eyes. He said, after a pause :—

"Anything to do with—with—you know?"

"All to do with it," answered the other, in a tone of profound wretchedness. "Anything else wouldn't be trouble at all. By Heaven, there is not any evil in existence which would not be easy to endure compared with that haunting, that most intolerable shadow!"

"Easy, easy," soothed Wilson. "You are not alone, are you? Haven't you got me? Since when did I turn you down? So that ancient matter has found you out?"

"Yes," answered Tremorro, in a hollow voice. "I thought there was only one living soul in the world who knew that I spent six months at Pentonville Prison. I believed that only Frank Wilson shared that secret with me. I was wrong. Someone else has got hold of it."

"No!" cried Wilson, in a shocked tone.

"Yes. Don't ask me how. I can't—won't go into details. I—I—my soul! there's a horrible prospect in front of me. He has commenced

blackmail. I got a letter from him two days ago, and I have heard from him since. What shall I do, Frank? It has made me afraid—afraid! It burns like a coal out of hell!" And Tremorro jumped to his feet, clenching his hands in agony.

"Do?" flashed Wilson, snarling the word through gritted teeth. "There's a 'phone in the house. Get on it! Bring in an inspector of police *now*. Get it over as you would the matter of an aching tooth. Your secret will be respected. The police will promise that. They have special treatment for the special kind of cur called a blackmailer. You are not in their bad book now, remember. That chapter is closed. Bring the police to your assistance; make a clean breast of it to them; and we'll have this dog kicked into the Gehenna he crawled from!"

Tremorro leaned his forearms upon the mantelpiece. "I cannot do that," he groaned. "This fellow might find a way of letting the story slip in spite of police protection. I tell you, Frank, that on the day when that secret is unearthed, on the day when my friends know that I served a term of imprisonment for obtaining money under false pretences, on that day I will clear right out of life. I swear that I will!"

"Stop that rot!" rapped Wilson, sternly. "Do I know this fellow?"

"No. He dropped on me like a bolt from the blue. He has got the whole hideous story right enough."

"His name?"

"He signs himself George Tarbart."

"What does he talk of doing?"

"The very worst. He knows how I feel towards Mary Stilling. He must have been watching me some time to have discovered that. He does not move without cunning; says that he thinks Mary ought to know."

Wilson whistled softly.

"Ah," said he, with reflection, "so he has not directly asked for a money price for his silence?"

"Not absolutely, but his drift is plain behind his manner. Could anything be more terrible? Suppose he writes to Mary?" Tremorro threw up his clenched fists as if the idea stung him like a snake-bite. "If she gets to know," he added, fiercely,

"HE SAW INSTANTLY THAT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO TREMORRO, WHO WAS LIMP AS AN EMPTY SACK IN HIS CHAIR."

desperately, goaded by despair, "I'll strangle him before I put an end to my wretched existence."

"Go steady, Charles," urged Wilson, in an iron voice. "There might be a bright side. Suppose Mary Stilling did know?"

Tremorro uttered a deep groan.

"Do you advise that?" he demanded, huskily. "Is that your counsel?"

Wilson refrained from answering. He stood regarding his friend in a singularly thoughtful fashion. A full two minutes of silence passed; then he said:—

"What address does this Tarbart put on his letter? I think I should like to have it."

"What for?" questioned his friend, his burst of frenzy ebbed to a whimper of utter misery. "What good can you do?"

"Nevertheless, I'd thank you for it," urged Wilson.

He went out a minute later, carrying his clubs with him. It was a beautiful forenoon in early autumn, and the air was bathed in serene sunshine. He regarded sadly the pale-blue sky.

"No golf this side of lunch," he muttered, disconsolately.

A brief walk took him to a quiet restaurant off Langham Place. He turned in here and ordered something light. When he had made short work of that, he lighted a pipe and studied in his note-book the address which his friend had given him. It was not such a bad address, and suggested that the man Tarbart, though of the slime, did not crawl there, but flew, rather, on a decent social plane.

Wilson shut up his pocket-book and called the waiter, whom he knew.

"George," said he, "take care of my clubs until I return in an hour or so."

Then he climbed into a taxi, and was driven to the address which he had noted, in Lupus Street, Pimlico.

On the third floor of one of those heavily-porched, tall grey houses he was fortunate enough to find his man. He entered to see Tarbart looking at the card he had sent up, and he perceived at once that Tarbart had no evil appearance save for a wretched nervous twist in his mouth which continually jerked it to the left, and that he wore a morning-coat not without style.

Tarbart bowed, colouring slightly as his visitor looked him up and down. He motioned to a chair as he murmured: "To what do I owe the pleasure——"

Wilson raised a protesting palm.

"Pleasure be hanged! Not a bit of it, neither for you nor for me," he announced, bluntly. "No need to hedge; no call to mince matters, Mr. Tarbart. My errand is briefly stated. I have a very close friend whose name is Charles Tremorro. I believe that you know him. To be short, he has told me about you. To be candid, he charges you with having criminal designs upon him. In fact, all that you know of this business I know also; and I am here to see you about it."

Tarbart whitened a little. He tried to smile, and his weak mouth wrenched itself sideways.

"And now," said Wilson, seated, slapping his broad hands on his thighs, "what the devil do you mean?"

Tarbart drew a deep breath. He was not going to be bullied.

"Really, I might retort by asking you what *you* mean," he protested. "I see that this is to be a heart-to-heart talk, so we will not waste words. Your visit does not catch me unprepared. Perhaps I had better tell you that I heard every word of the talk between you and Tremorro this morning. I had called upon him at his request, and we were discussing the matter when you burst in on us. He pushed me into an adjoining room because he was upset at the time, and acted under impulse."

"Upset? I should say he was upset!" menaced Wilson. "And so you played the eavesdropper—the sneak?"

"I could not help hearing," demurred Tarbart, softly. "But since it means that there is nothing hidden between us it might save you, and me, any distressing preliminaries."

Wilson stared hard. "You take this affair coolly," he replied, with grimness. "But I have come to see it finished. Your kindly conviction that a Miss Stilling ought to know a certain fact in my friend's history is dust in no one's eyes. I take it that for a sum of money you would lose this considerate conviction. Yes or no? Answer!"

"You speak brutally," murmured Tarbart, with his wretched grin.

"I thought so! We understand one another. Good! Now for action." Wilson leaned forward, clasping his knees, his keen eyes, which could follow a golf ball high into the blue, flickering with intense resolve. "My friend is afraid of you, Tarbart. I am not. It is in his power, if he had the spirit, to send you to jail; but he hasn't. I have! He regards concealment of his unhappy story as above all things imperative. I don't. In

these circumstances, I have made up my mind to act for him without asking his permission. You imagine that you can bleed him white? Wrong; and for the simple reason that he is poor. Has all that soaked into your intelligence? Now I will tell you what I mean to do. I will give you just five hundred pounds to keep your mouth shut, to keep your uneasiness regarding Miss Stilling in a perpetual abeyance. I will do this for Tremorro's sake, and his alone. That he is more to me than most men you are aware—after your eavesdropping scene this morning; and in the name of our friendship I will go thus far and no farther. Your answer?"

Tarbart crushed a too-ready reply, though his eyes gleamed.

"Unconditionally?" he ventured, after a pause.

"If the sad episode in my friend's life leaks out I shall put it down to your blabbing."

"I shall forget it, Mr. Wilson."

"Ah, you take the mask off, do you?" snarled the other. "Mind, if this thing becomes known I shall deal with you properly, for you have confessed to blackmailing. You shall have the money, but I'll be hanged if it shall reach you through a straight channel."

Tarbart sat up at that. "I don't follow," he answered, suspiciously.

"Oh, it is easily explained. I want your head in a noose, and I shall pull on the rope if you attempt any tricks later on. I have got to safeguard myself. Do you imagine that I am such a fool as to trust your mere word to keep quiet? Scarcely! You shall have five hundred from me, and you shall have it inside of an hour. I shall write you a cheque for the money—yes; but I make one vital stipulation: I will draw out the cheque, but you shall put my signature to it!"

Tarbart rose slowly. "I don't get you," he growled, darkly.

"You shall forge my name to the cheque," went on Wilson, with emphatic decision. "The money will be your own to do with as you choose, but your head will be in the loop of a rope, and if you break faith in the matter of Tremorro's secret I shall draw the noose. In plain terms, I am going to make you commit forgery in order that I may have a hold upon you. I shall tell my bankers that my signature was imitated, but I shall request them not to move in the matter without my instructions. They will remember you, the recipient of the money, however; five hundred pounds is not paid over a bank's counter any day in the week. Keep faith, and you shall be safe enough. I have too dear a regard for Tremorro to act against you, and you must see that. Now what do you say?"

"Say? I don't like it. Indeed, I don't!"

"And did I think you would? Well, refuse, and I go straight from here to the police. I want you to realize that in the most emphatic manner. Tremorro will not thank me for so doing, but I am perfectly assured that it would be the best thing for him, and I'd risk the severing of our friendship. I mean it, and you can come and see me do it if you like. Here it all is, then: keep silent for the sum of five hundred pounds, or go to prison for blackmailing. Now choose."

Tarbart walked about the room, very much perturbed, darting uneasy and resentful glances at his visitor.

"See here," he blurted, suddenly. "Suppose there are not five hundred pounds to your running account at the bank?"

"Suppose nothing. Do you imagine I am making this offer just to put you in a foolish position? What good would that do?"

"That may be all right," muttered Tarbart. "All the same, I'd be satisfied with half of five hundred rather than go through this hole-and-corner business."

"Half be it; but you sign my name," insisted Wilson, imperturbably.

Tarbart continued his restless pacing. He blurted out again:—

"The story in Tremorro's past might leak out at some future time without my having anything to do with it. How should I stand in that case?"

"It will not. That you got hold of it was a miracle; but it is most unlikely that anyone else will. Besides, if one did, I should be able to trace the telling to its source, I guess."

"All right," snapped Tarbart, savagely. "Draw out the cheque. I'm agreeable."

"And wise," added Wilson, with a grim smile. He unbuttoned his golfing jacket and tugged out a letter-wallet, from which he extracted one of the two or three loose blank cheque forms which he always kept about him for emergency. He placed one upon the table in the middle of the room. From the same russia-leather receptacle, from one of the smaller pockets of it, he produced a slip of paper bearing his signature, obviously kept there for identification purposes. He drew a chair under him.

"I shall make the cheque payable to you—George Tarbart," he announced. "I shall not cross it, so you need merely endorse it before presenting. I shall fill in the body of the cheque; it is your forging of my signature which alone matters."

Soon done. Wilson vacated his seat and handed the pen to Tarbart.

"First," said he, grimly, "you have got to get the knack of my signature. Best try it a score or so of times on a blank piece of paper. There it is—'F. H. Wilson.' Simple enough, and no flourishes; but you will want a little practice."

Tarbart commenced, putting down the name on a loose sheet time after time.

"You show a suspicious skill at that sort of game," growled Wilson, looking over the other's shoulder. "I shouldn't be surprised if it is in your line."

"What do you mean by that?" snarled Tarbart, savagely.

Wilson laughed. He took up the slip of paper and examined it critically.

"The last two specimens are well-nigh perfect," he commented. "Now try it on the cheque."

Here, however, Tarbart was a trifle nervous, with the result that he spoilt two of the pink slips.

"Only one left, and if you muddle that you will have to wait until to-morrow," Wilson warned. "I may change my mind before then. Go easy. Mine is a plain signature—too plain, I am often told."

Tarbart's last attempt was highly satisfactory. Wilson pored over it a long time.

"It will pass," said he, curtly. "Endorse it and be off with you. There's the address, over the date. Fifteen minutes' walk. Be smart, or you will have the bank shut."

Tarbart still demurred, although he took up his hat.

"They will probably give me notes mostly," he said, thinking hard. "Notes are traced so easily. How can I tell that, once I have gone through this thing, you will not turn on me, have the notes stopped, and me arrested?"

"Then get gold," snapped Wilson, shortly.

"Five hundred pounds in gold, paid over the bank counter?" answered the other, uncertainly. "I don't believe they'd do it."

"Then ask for less—half of it, if you like. Take all they can give you and the rest in notes. You will *have* to. And hurry!"

Still Tarbart hesitated.

"See here," he complained; "notes or gold, or both, it is more than likely that the bank will query this cheque before cashing it. They may suspect the signature right away, in which case I shall be detained. But even if they have no doubts it is probable enough that they will want to get into communication with you before paying me."

"Oh, confound your qualms!" exclaimed Wilson, angrily. "I thought of that before you did. I am hoping that they will not bother. On the other hand, I allow that they very likely will. But that will be only to your advantage, since I should be bound to tell them it is O.K., in which case I fear I should lose any future hold upon you, and must be content to accept your mere word to keep your blackmailing mouth shut for five hundred pounds. Still, it is nearly closing time, and they may pass the cheque through straight away. If they detain you, however, tell them to telephone to me at this address, I take it there is a 'phone in the house?"

"Yes, downstairs."

"Then get along. I'm making it a darned sight too easy for you, you brute."

Tarbart edged towards the door.

"All right," said he, imperfectly satisfied. "But if you give me away I swear that Tremorro shall suffer for it."

Wilson stood at the window and saw Tarbart leave the house and walk quickly down the long street.

Half an hour passed.

Tarbart re-entered the house. Wilson heard him coming up the stairs. He tossed aside the cigarette he was enjoying, and looked keenly at the door. Tarbart appeared.

"Well?" demanded his visitor, curtly. "You pulled it off?"

Tarbart, rather white, nodded.

"No questions asked?"

"Not one."

"Notes or gold?"

"Gold."

"You're a lucky swine."

Tarbart put his hat down on a chair, and he was in the act of tugging from his pockets some stiff paper bags containing the money when he was astonished to see Tremorro step from behind the door. He uttered a short, sharp cry, leaped back, and was instantly gripped, pinioned in the powerful arms of Wilson. Before he could put forth a single effort a soft substance was over his nose and mouth, and consciousness went out in a wild medley of darkening shapes.

It returned to him about an hour later—rather more. His sick brain groped after remembrance. He greeted it with a terrible oath. He plunged his hands into his pockets and found them empty. He staggered to his feet with a fierce impulse to do something. Upon the table was a brass candlestick in a brass tray, and in this tray was a sheet of blackened paper which crumbled to ashes as he touched it. Now, what had been written on this paper was as follows:—

"You had a good card, but you played it badly, my son. Tremorro is indeed my pal, and undeniably he was six months on the wrong side of Pentonville. But you went wide in assuming that he was a nice, reformed character. Alas, he is not that yet! Nor am I. That scene in his room this morning was arranged solely for your special benefit, for I knew perfectly well that you were listening. Now for the sequel.

"My name is plain Frank Wilson. I am not a customer of the bank; never was. F. H. Wilson is founder and worst player of our golf club. He *is* a customer of the bank. His floating account there at the moment is large, foolishly large, owing to a big remittance he has just put through. Our business is to find out these pleasant details, I cut his easy signature from a letter. I found his cheque-book in a pocket of his coat hanging in the club dressing-room. I removed three blank forms from three different places. You forged his name beautifully to one of them. You suspected that the bank would make inquiry before paying. I didn't suspect; I was certain that they would.

"HE WAS INSTANTLY GRIPPED AND PINIONED IN THE POWERFUL ARMS OF WILSON."

"The moment after you left here I slipped round to a call office installed in a barber's shop. I rang up Harris. Who is Harris? He is manager of the bank. Also, he is one of the most enthusiastic and one of the most erratic players at our club. Introduced by F. H. W. Our dialogue was not without interest. Here is my brief share of it:—

"'That you, Harris, my son? It is F. H. W. s p e a k i n g — y o u r estimable and worthy founder. What? Can't hear you very well. Line a bit out of order. P a r d o n it and my hoarse voice. Caught a rotten cold going round last week in wet boots. I want you to come round this evening. I've a new iron that could beat the devil. I say I want you to turn up this evening. This line is awful. I can scarcely hear y o u; h a r d l y recognize your voice. How does mine sound? Rough? Well, old man, I shall look for you about six. The greens are in the pink, and I want a revenge for that licking you treated me to on Tuesday afternoon. Forgotten it? I should say I haven't, nor forgiven you, either. It was that lucky kick as you approached the fifteenth green which turned your luck. Well, see you—oh, wait a moment, Harris. A friend is coming your way with a cheque of mine for rather a big amount. Five hundred. Yes, an open

cheque, payable to George Tarbart. I rang you up to say it's all O.K. He wants it all in gold. Yes, the whole lot. He is going abroad immediately, and has great faith in the English sovereign. He won't listen to good counsel, and wants the hard cash. What's that? War rumours making gold scarce? Wait until war comes, you pessimist. Of course, if you really cannot let him have it, then give him as much as you can. But I'd take it as a favour if you could meet his wishes. A smallish man, with a nervous twist at his mouth. Do what you can, old man. And turn up this evening as early as poss. I'm in good form, and will make you look pretty sick. Good-bye.'

"That was the gist of my conversation. I put that one over on Harris on the plea of a bad cold and a crackling wire affecting my voice, and because I knew all details of his play with F. H. W. No one noticed me go in or out of the 'phone box, although I had arranged a slight facial disguise before entering. When I got back here Tremorro had arrived, sharp to pre-arranged time. That is all, Tarbart. But, in recognition of the risk you ran, you will find fifty pounds behind the clock on your mantelpiece. We give that to you with a word of sound advice: Run, and run hard before the bank gets a start on the man who forged a cheque to the tune of five hundred of the best."

Wilson had swiftly composed this explanatory epistle. Tremorro admired it, then held it to the flame of a candle. He said:—

"This is a very fine literary effort. But we won't leave this or any scrap of evidence against us. Let the skunk do some guessing. He is far too foxy to get himself pinched. There is only one thing that bothers me. The bank will know that it was almost certainly some member of the club who diddled them out of five hundred."

"I should not worry about that!" laughed Wilson, grimly. "There are seven hundred members of our club; just four hundred too many, curse 'em."

"That," said Tremorro, reflectively, "is very true."

And he finished this admission at the precise moment that he took away the fifty pounds from behind the clock.

ACROSTICS.

The Last of the Fifth Series.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 30.

Who needs a pen knows well who will provide,
And, knowing it, soon finds his need supplied.

1. The cry at first was false: the quadruped
Will tell of moving water, backwards read.

2. 'Tis found within the mouth of bird, and near
The fox and goose in partnership appear.

3. Born in the month of June, in June she died.
Here half the bird will have to stand aside.

4. Ten miles from—where? See famous history,
Insisting not on strict orthography.

5. "Indeed"—you know these quatrains?—"oft before
I swore—but did I mean it when I swore?"

6. With this see saw, if thus we may translate;
The same will happen to a Western State.

7. Thoughts of tobacco well may make you start;
Coffee suggests the whole, opposed to part.

8. He is the fifth when this will later be:
He follows next when this is last but three.

PAX.

The foregoing acrostic and the previous ones of this series refer to advertisements appearing in this or recent issues of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Answers to Acrostic No. 30 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on July 7th.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

With their answers to this acrostic solvers must send also their names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 29.

1.	R	anso	M
2.	U	mm	U
3.	D	ea	L
4.	G	na	T
5.	E	l	I

NOTES.—Light. 1. Romans. 2. *Summum bonum.*

ANSWER TO No. 28.

1.	R	equie	M
2.	U	rub	U
3.	D	ue	L
4.	G	auntle	T
5.	E	ffend	I

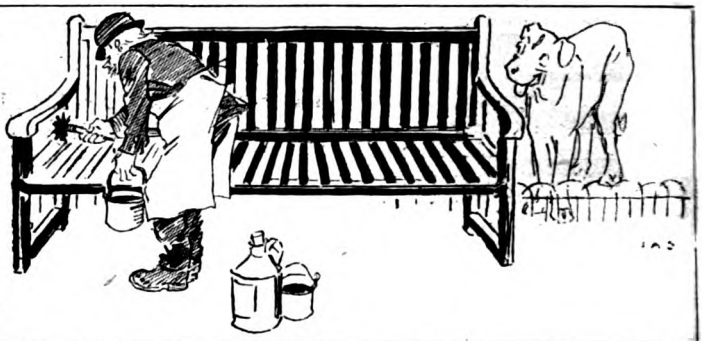
NOTE.—Proem. Barnaby Rudge.

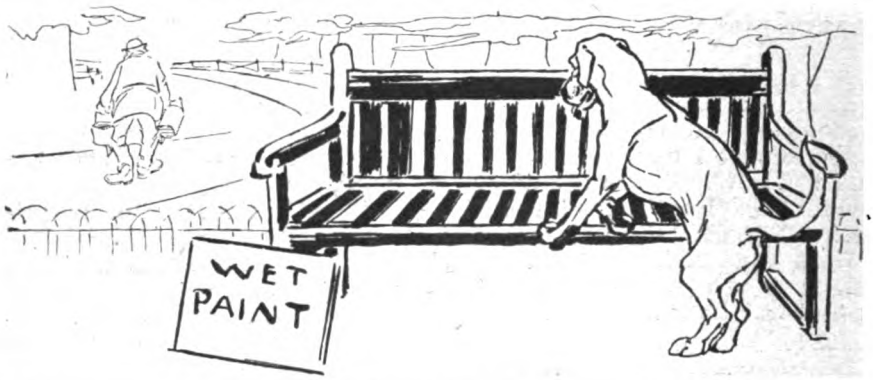
"Piou-piou" is accepted for the second light of No. 26.

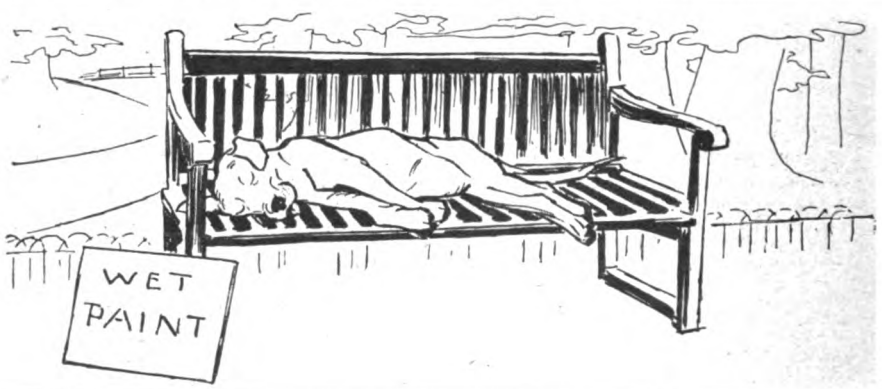
HOW HE GOT HIS STRIPES.

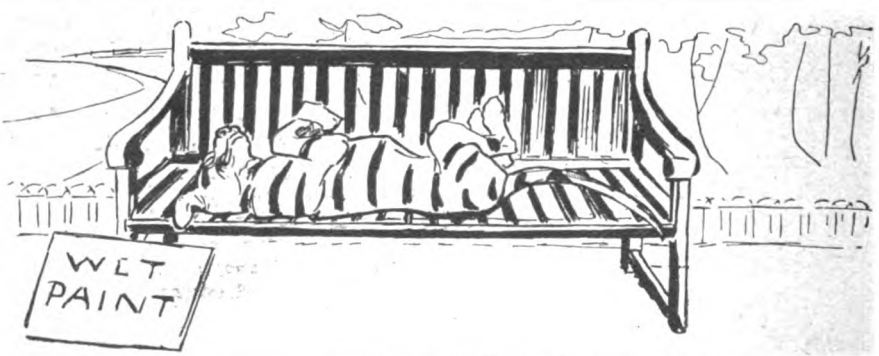
By

J. A. SHEPHERD.









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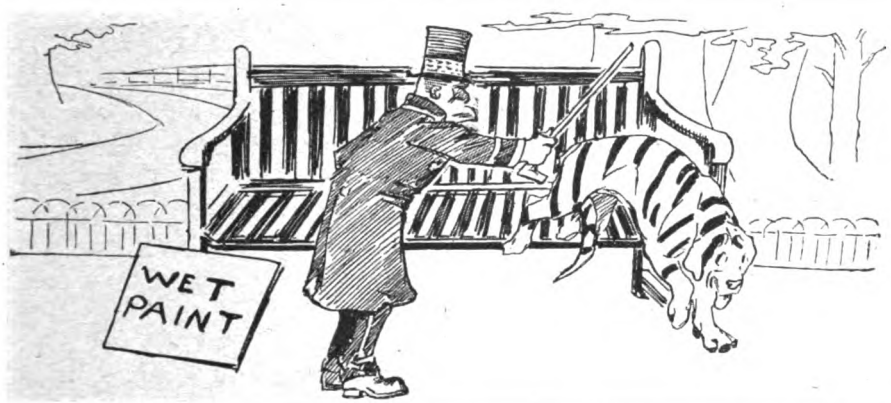
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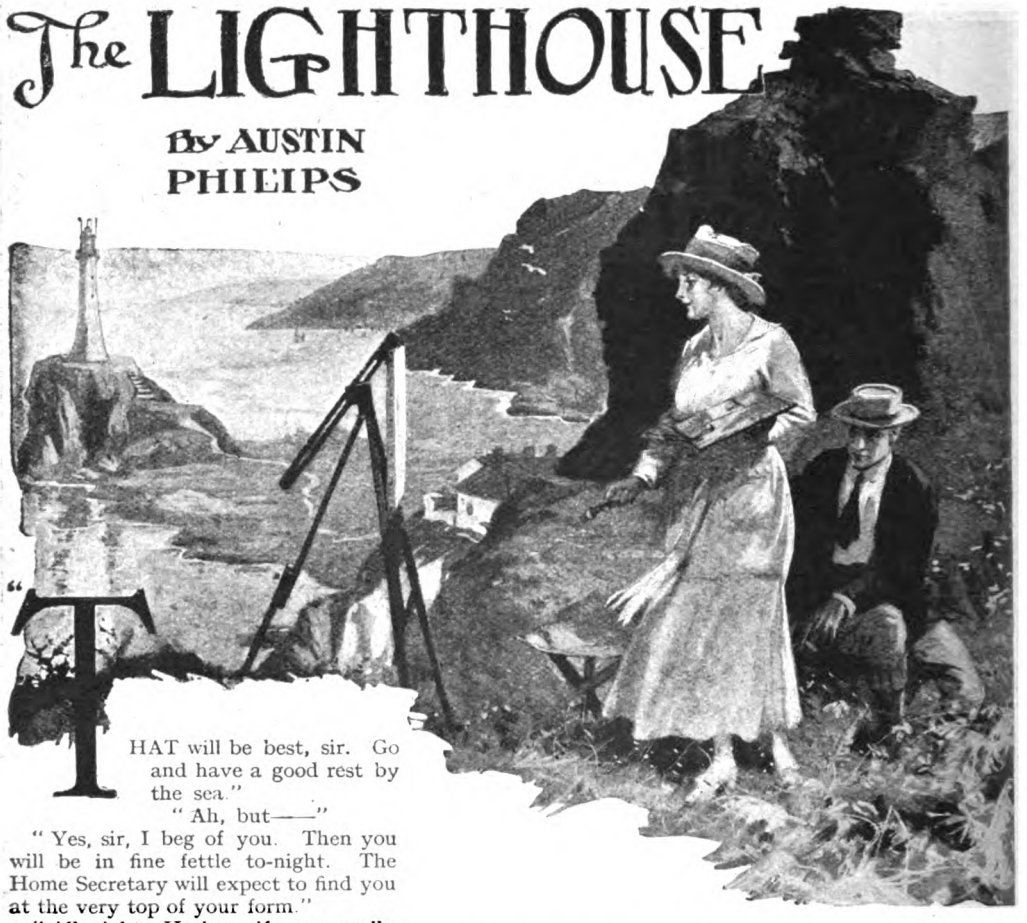
"Tiger"!!

The LIGHTHOUSE

By AUSTIN PHILIPS



Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

"THAT will be best, sir. Go and have a good rest by the sea."

"Ah, but——"

"Yes, sir, I beg of you. Then you will be in fine fettle to-night. The Home Secretary will expect to find you at the very top of your form."

"All right, Harber—if you really think so. But it seems a shame to leave you to do all the work this morning and this afternoon."

The Hon. George Calder, third son of Baron Courthope, late Lord Chief Justice of England, nodded to his agent, turned away from the stone portico beneath which he had been standing, and entered the door of the hotel. He climbed wearily to his bedroom, picked up the paint-box and camp-stool which he carried with him everywhere—even when electioneering—and sauntered down the stairs. The proprietor—a horsey little Londoner who had come to Cornwall recently, and was one of the whips of the Porth Tudy beagles—was standing in the hall. At the sight of the candidate, his hand went, saluting, to his head.

"Mr. Harber tells me you are going to have the day off, sir. It is very wise, if I may say so. A lunch is being put up for you, and I have told them to bring round the car."

"Thank you, Mr. Nash, but I don't think I want it. I don't mean the lunch, but the car. Haven't you got a bicycle you could provide me with instead?"

"Yes, sir, I have a bicycle. I'll lend it you with pleasure. But surely you would prefer the car!"

The Hon. George Calder frowned. He had spent three excessively exhausting weeks in canvassing a rural constituency, and to ride in a car was the last thing that appealed to him as recreation. He was stale with work and worn out with speech-making, sick of everything and everybody, and immensely eager to be alone. What solitude would he find, and what freedom, with a chauffeur waiting around?

"No," he said, inflexibly, and with something of the peevishness which comes from nerve-strain, "I prefer the bicycle. I need exercise very badly indeed."

The candidate's manner was not lost on the landlord. The bicycle was brought, the camp-stool and luncheon-basket strapped upon the carrier behind. The Hon. George slung his paint-box, mounted, nodded, and departed, going for a while past the cheerless, stone-faced buildings of the little West Cornwall town.

He was clear of them in a few minutes. Hedges

replaced houses; low walls encompassed roadside meadows bright with buttercups and clover; the moor began to disclose itself presently, yellow and sweetly scented, and a soft cool breeze blew over it, telling of the not far distant sea. He quickened pace unconsciously, feeling better already, restored to energy by solitude and exercise after three weeks' electoral campaign. He began to whistle, then to hum, and ultimately to sing aloud.

He continued to follow the main road for a mile or two, then turned to the right sharply, passed through a little village, and free-wheeled down a gorge of great steepness to the sea. He dismounted and put his bicycle into shelter, unstrapped his luncheon-basket and camp-stool, stood considering the swirl of waters in the miniature harbour in which some black-painted fishing-boats rocked at anchor, ascended a winding pathway, and came to the top of the cliffs. Across them, a mile or more distant, was a very remarkable scene.

A field of low sharp rocks, fully half a mile wide, projected six hundred yards into the Atlantic, and was bisected by a slender path of concrete. Towards the far end the path sloped steeply upward; the outer curve of a stone stairway was visible; and at the top of the steps a tall white tower was built upon the apex of a crag. It was the famous St. Eval lighthouse, dramatic in its aspect, romantic in its situation, historical and terrible in its associations, since where it stood a Norman baron had had his castle; and malignant cressets had betrayed brave mariners sailing the Cornish seas.

George Calder approached and stood regarding the luminous walls of the solitary, sun-bathed building with a veritable artist's eye. He was something of a throwback. By profession he was a barrister, but he had inherited no liking for the law. There had been stray poets and occasional painters in his family for several hundred years.

He hesitated whether to cross the pathway or to remain upon the cliff-top. He decided upon the latter, deposited his luncheon-basket in a sheltered cranny, and began to express the emotion which the scene gave him in excellent water-colour paint. In five seconds he was deaf, blind, and dumb to everything save the drama of the tower upon the crag.

Yet his surroundings were very beautiful. In a little bay to the left, just beside and below him, the almost oily water lay in strange still shapings. About and behind him the June sun glinted on the gay and yellow gorselands; the west wind cooled the atmosphere with a soft succession of sighs. The black basalt of the rocks was hot and radiant. The three successive headlands in the middle distance shimmered purple in the haze.

George Calder painted vigorously, if not overskilfully; he had a natural artistic feeling, a fine sense of colour, but hardly a ha'p'orth of technique. He was clearly very happy, for his handsome, freckled, fair-haired face, with its well-defined and regular features, had lost—at any rate temporarily—its slight expression of sadness which bordered upon discontent. He loved art. It was his appointed calling; but he lacked courage to give it his all. Politics—this, at thirty, was his first candidature—had been forced upon him by his family, sorely against his will.

An hour passed, and the sketch was finished. He rose and contemplated his work carefully from a yard or two away. Something was amiss. He could not tell in what fashion, but amiss it assuredly was. If only he had someone to give him a little expert advice!

Work had made him hungry. Instinctively he looked round towards the cranny where he had hidden his lunch. He started. He was no longer alone on the cliff-top. Someone was sketching the lighthouse from a point a hundred yards off.

George Calder loved women. He was an athlete, but a Romantic like his poet forbears, and had a sense of abstract beauty unusual in men of his antecedents and class. He had also the spirit of adventure which had led him, in many countries, to talk to all sorts and conditions of folk.

And this woman—his eyes were good, and a hundred yards is not a great distance—looked comely and reasonably young. He did not hesitate. He walked towards her with resolute steps. As he drew nearer he congratulated himself upon his discernment. She *was* young, and probably pretty, by her figure and the poise of her head.

She was working diligently—so diligently that he was within three or four yards of her before she heard his footsteps on the soft and soundless grass. She turned round quickly, faced him, and gave a great start. Possibly she was nervous. Yet she looked healthy enough.

She looked also exceedingly pretty. Her prettiness was as dark and irregular as the handsomeness of George Calder was fair and classical. She had brown eyes, a nose slightly *retroussé*, white teeth, and raven hair. The set of her head delighted him. George Calder hated foolish women, and she looked as if she had brains.

A glance at her picture assured him that she was not an amateur of painting. It had a design and a finish which his own completely lacked. He advanced a yard or so farther, and then raised his hat.

"Good morning," he said. "I see you are sketching the lighthouse, and that you are anything but an amateur. I am only a novice. I have always heard that true artists are generous. I wonder if you would be so very kind as to tell me what is wrong with my work?"

She considered him very curiously—indeed, with a certain hostility. Then, as it seemed despite herself, she smiled.

"I shall be very happy if I can be of any assistance. Where are you working? Oh, yes, over there!"

She rose, as though to accompany him. Protestingly he waved her back.

"No, no," he said. "I'll go and bring it you. Please stay where you are."

"But that's impossible. How can I criticize it properly from here? I can only help you if I see it from the point at which it was done!"

"Of course! How foolish of me. I'm very ignorant. I beg your pardon. I didn't realize when I asked you to help me that you would have to trudge a hundred yards in this sun."

She laughed now, rose, and began to walk towards his picture, he, beside her, in a little measure already a captive to her beauty, vitality, and *allure*. She was possibly six-and-twenty. She was certainly intelligent. Talking to her was better than electioneering, immeasurably better. George Calder began to visualize a pleasant afternoon.

They reached his picture. She regarded it critically, retiring and advancing, then retiring and advancing again.

"You've a nice dramatic sense," she said, ultimately. "The composition is pleasing, but the colour tones are not good. Give me your paint-box a moment. May I see what I can do?"

She took box and brushes, touched up the picture deftly, and then stepped away.

"There!" she said. "It isn't a masterpiece, but it is—frankly—better than it was."

"Yes, I see it now. Thank you—ever so much."

George Calder had a nice voice, which sounded even nicer when he expressed gratitude. She smiled, as if pleased with his thanks. Having adventured thus far—with profit—he adventured farther still.

"I don't know how to repay you," he began. "But may I make an attempt? I have a tolerably good lunch in a basket by the rock, there. There is far more of it than is good for me, too. Will you help me to partake?"

She hesitated, even frowned a little. Her face cleared, however. A curious, enigmatic expression, suggesting the half conception of a project, flitted over her face.

"Thank you," she answered. "It will give me much pleasure, provided there is plenty to spare."

He bowed his acknowledgments, approached his *cache*, retrieved the luncheon-basket, and returned. He put a question. She nodded agreement. They descended a cliff path and sought shelter at the foot of a tiny cove. The sunlit water splashed musical and close to them as they settled themselves in the shade.

The lunch consisted of caviare sandwiches—to which, as the landlord knew, George Calder was particularly partial—some cucumber sandwiches, some beef sandwiches, some cake, and a bottle of Graves. They partook with enjoyment and appetite. She talked to him of Paris and the Quartier. He listened, and interjected delightedly. She was a charming girl, yet completely a woman, and though only a painter in posse, he had all the native joy of the true artist in beauty and youth.

"How mundane we are!" she said, presently. "Fancy eating caviare in Cornwall. We ought to be devouring saffron-cakes and cream."

He shuddered.

"If you'd eaten all the cream that *I've* eaten this last month or so, you'd be glad of urban food. I've been—I've got some work to do—no, I don't travel in sewing-machines—which takes me into cottages a good deal. They offer me refreshment which I can't very well refuse. I'm cream-*blast* for life now. And I go positively yellow at the sight of a saffron-cake."

"Yes, I know the feeling. One of my brothers and I were once staying in a farmhouse where we had nothing to eat but ham and eggs and saffron-cakes and cream for three months. One day we could bear it no longer, so we cycled into Wadebridge and bought anchovies and olives and white wine and carried them back home. We didn't like to hurt the susceptibilities of the farmer's wife by eating them at table and leaving the supper, so we put the ham and eggs into a newspaper and took the anchovies and the other things into the fields. They were very good. Indeed, they were *so* good that we went back to town next day."

"I think that was rather nice of you."

"To go back to town?"

"No, not to hurt the susceptibilities of the farmer's wife. I hate upsetting people's feelings. Don't you?"

She winced and reddened, shot a curious glance at him, and made no answer. He offered her a cigarette. She declined. He smoked in silence. They sat looking at the sea.

Suddenly he pointed to the wonderful white tower.

"What a gorgeous life it must be," he said.

"You mean a lighthouse-keeper's?"

"Yes, so restful and peaceful. No worries. Just lighting up at night-time and keeping things clean."

She nodded. Her face contorted. She seemed to be struggling to come to some secret decision. Then she resumed in an easy tone.

"I imagine that, like all forms of existence, it has its drawbacks. Suppose we go a little way nearer the tower? I should love to climb those steps and look down on the water from the rock."

"It *would* be rather jolly. Yes, let's. Shall we take our sketching things or not?"

"Why, yes. We can work, one against the other. It will be stimulus for us both."

"All right. No, *I'll* fetch your belongings. You can pack up mine while I'm gone."

He strode off up the cliff-side to where he had been working. She began to put his things together, as he had asked. But she stopped almost immediately, and till he disappeared from sight sat looking after him, watching his alert and well-built form. Her face displayed a strange perplexity; indeed, she appeared to be undergoing a certain definite stress. It was only when he reappeared in sight again that she set seriously about her task.

He rejoined her and took her stool and her paint-box. They climbed the cliff together, walked along it till they reached the white stone bungalow where the keepers were quartered, descended a declivity beside it, and crossed the concrete path. It declined gently for some distance, and ran for three hundred yards at a dead level between the bare wide field of rocks. Then it sloped upwards, first slightly, then more steeply. It ended in a little platform beneath a flight of steps which themselves ended at another platform which encircled the foot of the tower.

Calder and his companion stood at the foot of the steps, looking down into the pellucid deepness of the cool green water below. Straight ahead of them a cargo steamer bumped her way to Bristol in ballast, and another, full laden, fought her way heavily to Land's End. To the left the sun made glorious the gorse-clad slopes of the three great headlands which ran far out into the sea.

"Aren't they beautiful?" she said, pointing to them. "I suppose we've a right here! Let us sit down and paint."

He nodded eager agreement. They unfolded their camp-stools and began to work. Up above, in the railing-ringed platform which surrounded the pedestal of the lighthouse, a keeper stood looking down. He glanced at the land at intervals. The tide was possibly incoming, but the rock field was almost bare.

The pair painted indefatigably. Now and then George Calder's companion glanced over her shoulder. She seemed to regard the bare rock field and the concrete path across it with a certain interest, much as the keeper above. She even drew Calder's attention to it once. After that her glances were unseen by him. This was only natural. The fever of work had got hold of him. He was happy in the stimulus of the companionship, and he painted like a possessed.

An hour passed. The sketches, as sketches, were finished. Calder looked admiringly at hers.

"I wish I had your technique," he said. "Where did you learn?"

"I told you—in Paris, and St. Ives, where I've got a studio on the harbour. The place is a little Paradise. Of course, you know it well!"

"No, I don't; I never set foot in Cornwall till this wretched election came along."

She started as he uttered the word "election," but her voice was indifferent, almost over-calm.

"The election! Isn't there one at Porth Tudy? Are you taking part in that?"

"Rather! I'm Hamlet."

"Hamlet!"

"Yes—the election, you know. At least, I and another fellow—the other candidate—Bruce, his name is. He takes things rather seriously, but he's a brother barrister, and quite a decent chap. I have to blackguard his side awfully, and he blackguards mine."

"It must be rather fun, taking part in an election. Which of you is going to win?"

"I don't know. They say I am. My agent's rather a smart chap."

"Then what are you doing here? Why aren't you at work?"

"I've got a great meeting to attend to-night at Delaford—the quarry place, you know—and it can easily turn the scale. The Home Secretary is coming to talk to 'em, and I've got to speak, too. I was fagged out a bit. My agent advised me to have an afternoon's rest. It suited my book to a T."

She was silent. They stood for a minute looking out to sea. It was more than ever beautiful. The wind had dropped; the water was green in places, purple in others, ending in a marvellous blue. There was no visible movement, but there came at intervals the boom against the rock wall beneath them of a big, slow, heavy wave.

Suddenly Calder put his right hand into a waistcoat-pocket, pulled out and glanced at his watch.

"Well, it's been perfectly gorgeous," he said, and turned round in the speaking. "I've never enjoyed an afternoon so much. But I must be getting back now, and—my God!—I beg your pardon—but look at the sea!"

"The sea! Where? Oh, what does it mean?"

There was no need to ask the question. The concrete path from the shore was visible no longer; it was completely and utterly submerged. The rock field was invisible likewise. The tide had come up while they had been painting. The lighthouse was cut off from the land.

They looked at each other. Dismay, tempered with amusement, was written on Calder's face. On her face was written—well, it was difficult to say.

"We're marooned!" he said. "Something must be done immediately! Let's see the keeper at once!"

He hurried up the steps, reached the pedestal platform, and banged on the gun-metal door. A keeper appeared leisuredly. He held up a protesting hand.

"No admittance, sir, unless you've got a permit. I'm sorry—very; but it's against Trinity House rules."

"Quite so, quite so. Very proper to be so strict to duty, but I'm not trying to come in. On the contrary, I'm most anxious to get out. But the tide's up. Have you got a boat?"

The man's eyes twinkled. He looked exceedingly amused. "I'm afraid I'll have to break rules," he said. "Yes, I shall have to let you in."

"Why?"

"Because there is no boat and no landing-place. There are currents all around these rocks. And I can't very well let you and the lady stay outside on the parapet till morning."

"Till morning?"

"Yes, sir; it's half-past five now. It will be close upon midnight before you can get away."

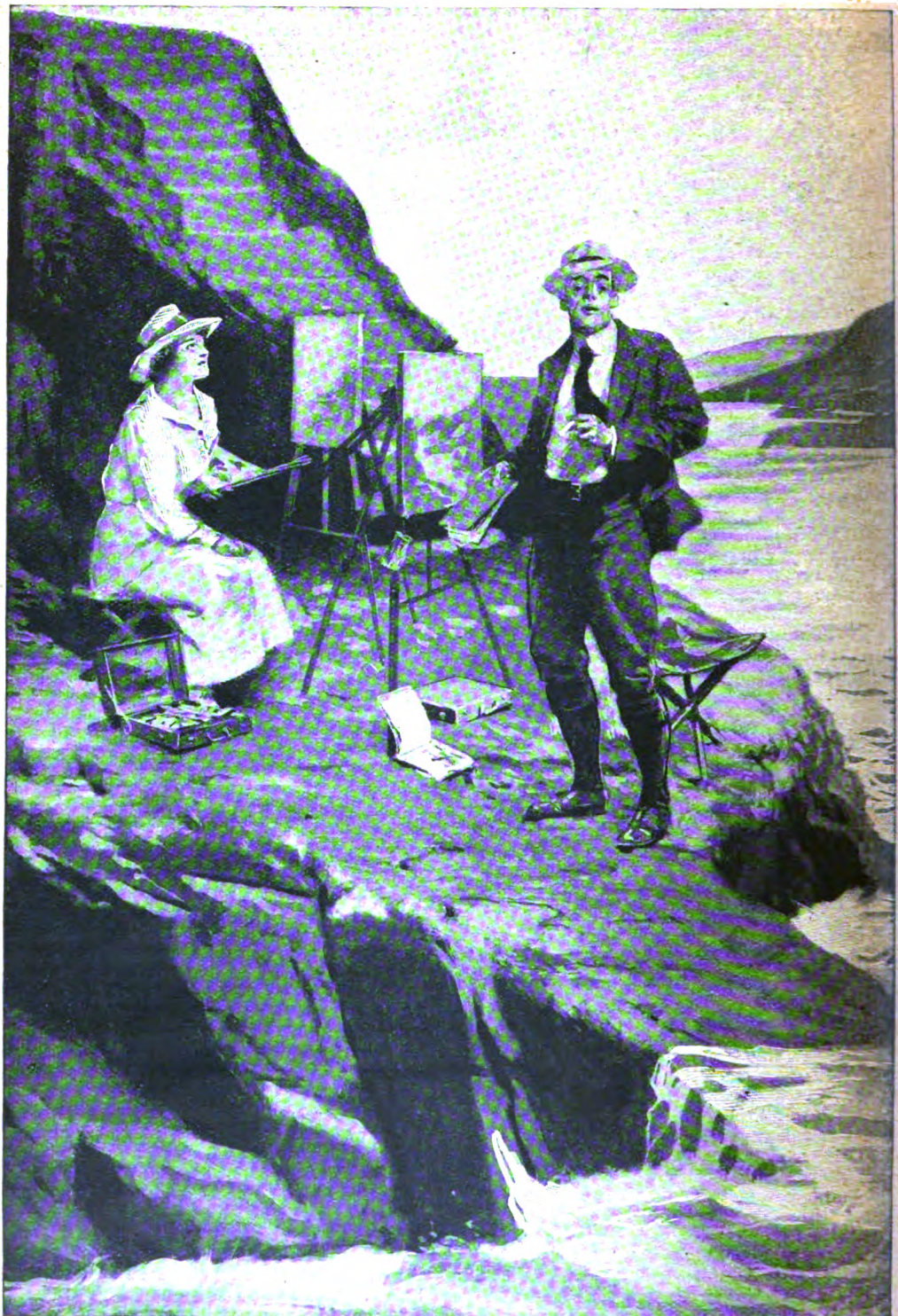
George Calder stood motionless. Before him passed, with horrible distinctness, the scene at the Delaford Hall. The candidate would be missing. The Home Secretary would be furious. The electors—those quarrymen who could turn the fortunes of the morrow—would be loudly and vociferously enraged. He glanced round helplessly at the girl, who had followed him up the steps.

"What are we to do?" she asked, breathlessly. "Are we—is it true that we are marooned?"

"Perfectly true. There is no escape before twelve o'clock to-night!"

There was a silence. Calder and the girl were looking at the treacherous sea. The keeper stood smiling at them benignantly, and with an air of having encountered, and possibly contrived, to his own financial advantage, similar situations before.

"The tide comes up like a mill-race, sir," he said, presently. "You're not the only lady and gentleman as has been caught. Better come in



"THE TIDE HAD COME UP WHILE THEY HAD BEEN PAINTING. THE LIGHTHOUSE WAS CUT OFF FROM THE LAND."

an' have a cup o' tea. An' then go on painting—if you like."

"Sound advice!" Calder nodded, and set himself to show outward annoyance no further. "We must make the best of it, keeper; that's all."

He stood aside to let his companion pass through the doorway. He himself followed. Their guide led them through a room—whose round walls were hung with lifebelts and buoys, coils of rope, fishing-rods, and a home-made lobster-pot—up sixteen iron steps, which led into a room which contained immense oil cisterns, up more stairs, which led into a similar room, thence into the winch and crane and store rooms, and finally into the living-room, clean and cosy, with cooking-range, shelves, dresser, pans, pots, and a bookcase filled with volumes supplied by Trinity House. A vast kettle was boiling; there was a round table in the centre through which passed a pillar to the ceiling and the floor. The keeper motioned them to be seated, and set before them bread and butter and cake.

They began to eat. The keeper glanced at them, excused himself, and climbed to the upper floor to see to the light. The meal continued. Calder sat looking at the girl. He found her charming. But her vitality seemed to have deserted her; she seemed to avoid looking at him and to be nervous, distracted, and *distraite*.

"Aren't you hungry?" he said, presently. "You don't seem to be eating anything."

"Oh, I'm all right, thanks. I haven't much appetite. I had such an enormous lunch."

Her voice trembled as she answered. Calder did not reply. He sat watching her more closely, and bent his brows to a frown. Evidently silence irked her. For suddenly she burst out:—

"You *are* strange! You're calm, extraordinarily! What about your election? You don't seem a bit upset."

"Don't I? I don't wear my heart on my sleeve, in any case. I'm a bit of a philosopher, too; it's no use crying over spilt milk. By the way, your people—they will be anxious, will they not?"

"Oh, no; I'm very independent. I'm always doing impulsive things."

Calder's brows relaxed now. A smile took the place of the frown.

"By the way," he said, "we were foolish to let that tide catch us, weren't we? It's like the Corbière at Jersey. But I didn't know about *this*. I should have thought *you* might have, seeing that you know Cornwall so well."

"Oh, but——"

"It was the keeper's fault really." He brushed lightly over the reproach he had half made her. "Why didn't he tell us? He must have seen us all the time. I suspect him. He seems as if he'd done it all before. He's a pleasant fellow, very, but I suppose one never knows what is in people's minds."

She started perceptibly. Again George Calder smiled. She lifted her cup suddenly, drank from it, and set it down.

"It's hot here," she said. "Suppose we go up that ladder. I should like to see the lamp."

He nodded. They climbed two more iron staircases, passed through the low light room with its Argand burner, came to the bedroom, where another and recumbent keeper thrust his head from a bunk to look at them, emerged into the service room with its shelves, galvanometers, books, and papers, and finally climbed to the lantern, on the top floor of all. It was sixteen feet high, and the great Douglas six-wick burner was covered with red curtains to match the colour of the exterior paint that it might serve as a mark for mariners by day.

The keeper showed them the immense drums, the bulls' eyes, the winding gear, and the rest. They stood awhile on the platform, surveying the spacious scene.

The evening was quite windless, the sea was still and glassy, a steamer was passing; the thud of her screw was plainly audible; a trail of smoke in the form of a succession of the letter "S" lay behind her, very black as it issued, floating at almost one horizontal level, growing gradually bigger and lighter in colour, whitey-black against a grey-white sky. Other steamers appeared presently. Immense trails of smoke followed them. Two more trails came from now invisible steamers, smudging the horizon blue.

The girl gave a sigh of exceeding deepness. Calder looked at her with some concern.

"I hope you're not feeling worried," he said, gently. "After all, we must treat this as an adventure, which it is."

"No, I'm not worried. I'm only—only a little tired. I think it must be from working with the sun upon my back. I should like to go down to the sitting-room. No, please don't bother to come with me. I would prefer to be alone."

Calder bowed. She disappeared down the ladder: he remained talking to the keeper who was busy with the great lamp. The man descended presently and returned with Calder's camp-stool, then descended again. The candidate was left alone. And he realized that to signal to the shore the details of his folly would do his cause harm, not good.

He leaned over the railing of the balcony, looking seaward, but he saw farther than the water. He was back upon the land; he beheld the Delaford meeting, watched the hall fill, the Home Secretary enter, and heard the comments on the absence of himself. He also heard the hecklers. They were asking for Mr. Calder to appear. The Home Secretary and the agent made excuses. The hecklers and their comrades jeered. The effect was bad—exceedingly. Indeed, this absence was fatal. It confirmed waverers against him. It turned over many friends. The few hundred votes which would settle things either way were lost, not to be regained. The Home Secretary would never forgive him. His own family would say: "Just like George!" Poor old Harber, who had worked so hard for him! That was all that mattered really; that was the only rub.

The only one? Yes. For he, George Calder, personally, did not care twopence; indeed, though he would not wilfully have absented himself, he rejoiced at this trick of Fate. It was the end of his political troubles; he need never

stand again. He was spared hot nights in London, much vain and wearying argument, and everything that he loathed. He blessed the tide; he blessed the keeper who had not warned him of its pace. He also blessed—but he hesitated—for he was not absolutely sure. He sat looking west for an hour, or two hours; dreaming remarkable dreams. He remained till the man who had been in the bunk relieved the one who had admitted them, till the lamp was lighted, and its great and luminous pencils swept the darkening seas. Then he descended to the living-room. The keeper off duty was getting supper for himself and for the girl.

She hardly glanced at him. They began to partake of the meal; afterwards the keeper offered her his bed in the upper room. She refused it. The man left them and turned in. The window of the living-room was open. The fire burned in the grate. More food lay handy for them—whenever they should have need.

They exchanged a little conversation. She still seemed ill at ease. Presently she yawned. He suggested that they should sleep. The strong air had made them drowsy. They leaned back on cushions in their chairs. They slept beyond midnight, and awoke simultaneously with a start.

There was a reason for it. The fog signals were bellowing; the morning air was thick. They sat up and regarded each other. Calder rose, put on the kettle, and came back to his chair.

"Four o'clock!" she said, glancing at the clock above the fireplace. "And the day of the polling! It will be rather awful, facing your committee. But I suppose you don't mind?"

"No; I don't mind. And for an excellent reason. Your brother will certainly get in!"

"My brother!"

"Yes. Your brother. I think you are Miss Bruce!"

There was a fateful silence. The girl turned her head away, forced herself to look at him, and again averted her glance. Calder smiled—not unkindly. His always nice voice was even nicer now.

"I should be interested to know, Miss Bruce," he said, "if your brother is a party to this? It hardly looks like it. I shouldn't credit him with quite the imagination or the prophetic instinct to tell that I was going to take a day off!"

She lifted her head again. This time she sustained his glance. She was smiling a little, even though her eyes showed shame.

"No," she answered, slowly. "You are right, Mr. Calder. Frank knows nothing of this. It is all my doing. I knew all about the tide. I recognized who you were when you first spoke to me—and I had heard of people kidnapping candidates—so I brought you here to sketch!"

Calder bowed. He was about to answer, but the girl began again.

"I didn't do it for my brother—altogether—it was more because of a friend who taunted me with staying at St. Ives, and working and doing nothing—you see, I've taken no part in the election—up till now! She wants to marry Frank—and her father has lots of money—and they are ambitious for her, and Frank's election would make things sure. I suppose I've behaved disgracefully—but I still want Irene to get Frank. Though I'm sorry—far more sorry than I thought was possible—now I know that she was wrong when she said you were horrid, and that you are so—so different from what I thought!"

She ended, a little breathlessly. Calder sat looking at her steadfastly; quickly she began once more.

"I beg your pardon. I realize I *have* been wicked. I suppose you hate me more than anyone you've ever met in your life?"

"Not at all. Why should one hate a person who has done one perhaps the greatest kindness that one has ever known?"

"Kindness!"

"Yes, kindness. Permit me to explain!"

Calder crossed his legs deliberately, set his arms on the chair-arms, put the tips of his fingers together, and began to speak.

"Your 'kindness' consists of this," he said. "You have immured me here and marooned me—and saved me from a horrible success which would have settled my life in a channel for which it was never intended; and I have learned by this—this accident—what I most want—and mean—to do! I knew infinite happiness and ecstasy when I worked so hard yesterday; it was the stimulus of being with someone of one's own kind. I shall relinquish the Bar altogether. I am going to give my life to paint. I have enough—ample—to keep me from the workhouse. Do you think I am an awful fool?"

"A fool—no. But it's astounding—positively—that a man with your influence and connections should wish to renounce the world. Doesn't it mean rather cutting yourself adrift?"

"From materialism—yes—and perhaps success, as the world sees it! But—don't think me high-falutin—I shall possibly gain—my soul!"

He paused. She looked at him in amazement and admiration. He added a final word.

"Now do you wonder why I am not furious with you—why I say that you have done me the greatest kindness that was ever done me in this world? Let us speak no more of it. The kettle is boiling. I am going to make you some tea!"

He put words into action, cut bread, toasted it, cooked eggs. She sat watching him. Once she offered to help him. He refused. They began breakfast. The fog signals had ceased to sound now. The mist was evidently gone.

They were silent for many minutes. Then Calder raised his cup.

"A toast!" he said. "Frank Bruce, Esquire, of the Inner Temple, the member for Porth Tudy and Penwith!"

She hesitated for a second, then drank and set down her cup.

"The defeated candidate!" she said. And she rose this time and drank generously again.

Calder bowed his acknowledgments and got upon his feet.

"The health of the real victor," he said, gallantly. "With the defeated candidate's thanks!"

He drained his cup and replaced it. She

blushed, and silence fell. It was broken by the sound of footsteps on the iron stairway. The keeper was in the room.

"It's half-past four, sir," he said, and stood before them. "Unless you want to stay till dinner-time, you had better be going. In an hour it will be too late!"

The pair looked at each other. In the pleasure of conversation, neither had remembered the tide. Calder was the first to speak.

"Personally, I should like to spend the day painting; but I suppose I had better go. Not that it is going to make any difference. Still, I suppose it is my duty to return as soon as I can!"

"Yes; I agree with you. For my part I ought to get back to our hotel. My mother was to come down by the Riviera Express yesterday. She will be wondering where I am."

"Very well, then. Keeper, I think we will go!"

The keeper smiled and nodded. Miss Bruce preceded Calder down the successive ladders to the ground floor. The keeper, who followed, got together their things for them. Calder lingered behind a little, took out his pocket-book, and selected a five-pound note.

"Keeper," he said, carelessly, "I am changing my profession shortly, but I shall not adopt marooning, profitable as it seems to be. I hope you are satisfied. I am. I wish you a very 'good day!'"

He hurried after his companion; the morning was cold a little, and the sea was quite hidden, but the water lay fresh in the rock pools, and there was an incomparable scent of the sea. They reached land, crossed the cliff, and found their bicycles: hers, too, propped beside a fishing-boat close to where he had left his. They were already rusty. But—as was to be expected in a country where peasants and fisherfolk are aristocrats—they had not been disturbed.

Calder wheeled them up to the top of the hill above the little fishing-cove. She was mounting when he turned. From where they stood the white tower was visible, glorious and increasingly nitident in the sun which was winning through.

"The lighthouse—where I found myself!" said Calder, bowing, and taking off his hat to it. And he got upon his machine.

They rode on through the yellow and sweet-smelling moorlands; they passed on by low-walled meadows; they saw presently the outskirts of the little stone-built town. Calder slowed up and got down.

"Thus far, and thus far only!" he said, regretfully. It would never do in a small place like Porth Tudy for you and me to be seen together, coming home with the milk. We shall meet to-morrow, possibly—when the poll is declared at the Union—and no doubt we shall find a mutual—and introducing—friend. For the time, at any rate, it must be *au revoir!*"

She nodded, and put out her hand to him. He took it—and held it. She did not seem to notice that he did not let it go!"

"Considering how I've treated you, you've been perfectly sweet to me," she said, impulsively. "In fact, I think you're the nicest man I know!"

"I wonder if my agent and the Home Secretary will agree with you? I rather fancy they will have a different point of view. However, that is a detail. The main question is, when are you going back to St. Ives?"

"The day after to-morrow. But why do you ask me that?"

"Oh, merely vulgar curiosity. You have a studio on the harbour, I think you said!"

"Yes. I told you so when we first met each other."

"I know. And I remembered it. Are there—it is not the only studio in the place?"

"Oh, no. There are many more!"

"And to let?"

She screwed up her face and looked thoughtful. Then she began to smile.

"Yes. There are some to let," she answered. "But not many—especially on the harbour side. There is just one—a big one—and it happens to be empty now. It is called the Yellow Studio, and is only a door or two from mine!"

Calder smiled: She smiled also. There was a pleasant—and final—pause.

"You're holding my hand rather long," she said, presently. "Isn't it time you let it go!"

"I suppose it is. But—touching that same studio——"

He stopped abruptly. Along the road, in the direction from which they had come, a cart was approaching, with the sun sparkling on its cans. He saw it, swore softly, stooped suddenly, and kissed the back of her hand.

"There *is* the milk!" he said. "I fly—there is no alternative. For the moment, *au revoir!*"

The Hon. George Calder failed to win the suffrages of the electors of Penwith and Porth Tudy by some four or five hundred votes: he retired—it was whispered to avoid his family who had heard of his marooning—to spend the rest of the summer at St. Ives. He spent the winter there likewise—and it is probable that he will spend there many summers and winters more. His painting has improved out of all recognition since he took to wife a competitor and critic in the shape of the successful candidate's sister, and it is quite within the limits of possibility that he will some day become an R.A.

MULTUM IN PARVO.

A COMPENDIUM OF SHORT ARTICLES.

THE STORY OF THE EEL.

BY EDWIN BJÖRKMAN.

"AS IT HUNTS AND TRAVELS IT GROWS IN SIZE AND STRENGTH AND WILES, UNTIL IT BECOMES THE TERROR OF THE WATERS IN WHICH IT LIVES."

THROUGHOUT the ages, wherever men have speared or trapped that hard-dying, slippery eater of carrion, the eel, it has formed the nucleus of much superstitious lore. Until a few decades ago even men of science admitted that the eel embodied one of Nature's most puzzling mysteries, because they had been utterly unable to discover when or where or how it mated and multiplied. To-day the mystery is solved, and in its place we have another mystery. For such are the strange, elusive ways of life that her one reason for permitting us to extend our knowledge seems to be a desire to reveal still more clearly the immensity of our ignorance. All she does, apparently, is to tell us a fairy-tale now and then, and we, poor children, swell out our chests and imagine ourselves magicians and readers of sphinxes. But her tales are good, and one of the best as well as newest is that which gives us the life-story of the eel.

If on your map of the North Atlantic you draw a triangle connecting the Faroe Islands, the Azores, and Bermuda with one another, the sides of it will pass through the principal breeding-grounds of the common eel. It is born far down in those silent, cold, and bitter mid-sea deeps, where the pressure is like that of hundreds of steel safes piled on top of one another; where dwell some of the most monstrous and some of the most exquisite organisms known to man, and where the only light ever seen is a pale phosphorescence that flashes from some shadowy hunter or some equally shadowy prey.

Down there the eel begins its life as a tiny, transparent speck of organic matter, one of ten million eggs dropped from the bursting ovaries of the same mother-eel. Who knows how many of those millions are eaten or otherwise destroyed while floating about in those remote and mysterious depths? Within those that survive subtle changes take place as they rise little by little into regions where an opalescent dawn bespeaks the presence of the sun above.

And one day the egg turns into a larva, a little creature resembling one of those conventionalized fishes drawn by some early Christian on the wall of a catacomb. It is as thin as a razor-blade, transparent, and colourless. One might take it for a slight condensation of the water itself. The eyes alone show like tiny dark spots on the head. When such larvæ were first discovered in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and long before anybody suspected their connection with the eel, it was the actual and relative minuteness of that head which caused scientists to name them Leptocephalidæ, or small-heads.

By and by the larva grows to a length of about three inches. And it grows unaccountably, for it never takes food. Yet it is trembling with an energy that keeps its tail swishing incessantly. Thus it moves steadily upward and shoreward. For miles and miles the waters may be teeming with such little creatures. There are millions upon millions of them, all urged by the same mysterious instinct to make blindly, but inexorably, for the distant shores whence came the parent fish.

No sooner has the larva attained its full size than another change takes place. It begins to lose its excessive height. Soon it looks like a ribbon. Then it begins to shrink along its axis, too; and at the same time its sides begin to fill out. After a while the miniature flounder has been transformed into a miniature knitting-needle, and measures and weighs about one-third less than did the larva at the height of its growth. In that shape it has long been known to layman and expert alike as a glass-eel, or elver. Still it remains colourless except for the eyes; still it refrains from taking food; still it persists in swimming landward.

One day the shore is reached; but still the search and the onward push go on, until at last the mouth of some hospitable river is achieved. Whether it be the Hudson or the Thames, the Neva or the Rhine, the story is the same. Those fresh waters pouring down from the uplands seem to draw the hordes of little glass-like creatures magnetically, and into those waters they turn as if steered by some unseen hand. Were you there to watch, you might think that all the little fishes in the world had dropped their eyes, and that all those eyes were moving up the river in endless

parade. That is what, since of old, has been called an eelfare.

It is spring then, and the eel-to-be is about a year old, while about eighteen months have passed since the previous generation came down like silvery streaks with the autumn flow of some similar river, bound for the breeding-grounds abroad. During that first year of its life as egg and larva and glass-eel it has taken no sustenance from without (or at least we have not been able to find any proof of its doing so), and yet it has been discharging energy uninterruptedly, as if its minute body were stored with some radio-active element.

But with the feel of the fresh water comes appetite, and with the food comes colour. It creeps into the transparent body from the tail, and appears in spots along the flanks. At the same time a twofold process of growth and of solidification occurs, and finally we behold a young eel of the familiar type, with its colour of muddy yellow, its pugnacious lower jaw, and its fin-crest, which lines the greater part of its back and much of its belly.

This creature seems to live for one thing only—to feed. To its larder the quick and the dead are equally welcome. It devours eggs and those that have laid them. It pokes its spade-like head under stones and overturns them in order to get at the small fry hiding beneath them. It peers into every hole in search for prey. The night is its favourite hunting-time, and it travels while hunting, always against the descending waters, always farther into the rising uplands. Through tributary rivers, creeks, and brooks it pokes its way. It crosses lakes and ponds and pools. It goes squirming across fields and meadows even, lest any well or spring remain unsearched; for this strange creature of pelagic origin can live for a long time out of water if some emergency should so require. And as it hunts and travels it grows in size and strength and wiles, until it becomes the terror of the waters in which it lives. This may go on for four or five or six years, until the female measures from three to four feet, and the male about twenty inches less.

Then all of a sudden, on some crisp and windy autumn day, the secret call is heard from the far-off, salty deeps. The eel, wherever it be at the time, knows it and obeys. Its mating-time has come. It ceases to hunt. It cares no more for food. Its snout grows narrow and peaked. Its eyes grow large and lustrous. Its muddy colour turns into a sheen of silvery-grey. Those are the nuptial garments.

At the same time strange stirrings pass through that lithe, glistening body. New processes are starting up within. The next generation is in the shaping. And all at once the eel turns its head down-stream and goes flashing through the favouring waters as if it knew the way and the goal beyond all doubt or misgiving. And as it came, so it goes, not singly, but in great companies, "hurtling with the spate down to the sea," as one naturalist puts it. The males go first; then come the females, already swelling with their burdens of new life.

If, as may happen, the eel had travelled three or four thousand miles to reach the spot where it was overtaken by the message out of the distant deep, it will travel back that many miles. But the route which took a year or two for its covering in one direction will be traversed in six months when the direction is reversed. There is no needless zigzagging, no tarrying by the roadside, no hesitancy. Life has spoken, and in this primitive creature there is no reason to make it question life's command or quarrel with it. If in captivity when the message is received, the eel will do its utmost to obey; and failing, it will die. It seems quite incapable of reaching full sexual maturity apart from the peculiar conditions of pressure, salinity, and temperature characterizing its birthplace.

But even if it is able to follow the mystic call, it must die as soon as the goal is reached and its mission fulfilled. For the law of the eel is this: from the heart of the sea to the heart of the land and back again it may travel once, but to travel twice in either direction it is never permitted. Like a flower, it is doomed to die in turning to fruit. Upon its return to the destined spot there must follow some kind of courtship, some ecstatic dance through the darkling waters, but of all that we know nothing.

What we do know is that no sooner has the eel dropped its burden of milt or roe than the mark of death is upon it. It is as if its allotted store of vital energy had been passed on in its entirety to the new generation. The eel has done its duty, and the eel can go. Decay sets in: its bones grow soft; its flesh ulcerates; its teeth fall out; sight fades from its eyes. And at last the end comes, but just how who can tell? The story of the eel is finished, but only to begin all over again in everlasting reiteration.

For half a century American, Italian, and Danish men of science have been at work coaxing this wonderful tale from the reluctant lips of life, taking down a letter or a word at a time, and reconstructing every passage a score of times before they dared to grant it final acceptance. Even now the tale is not complete, but one need have no fear; it will be finished some day—up to a certain point.

"IT GOES SQUIRMING ACROSS FIELDS AND MEADOWS EVEN, FOR THIS STRANGE CREATURE CAN LIVE FOR A LONG TIME OUT OF WATER."

THE HUMOURS OF AUSTRALIAN POLITICS.

BY P. J. BENNETT.

THE proceedings of the Australian Parliaments are not always marked by seriousness or dullness. Occasional flashes of wit or humour reward the gallery-man for his close attention to what is going on. Sessional openings, which are as a rule as decorous as levees, and quite as destitute of incident, have during the last twenty years provided, involuntarily of course, episodes that have provoked broad smiles. It is said that George IV., when Prince Regent, won a bet of a hundred guineas from Sheridan by succeeding in incorporating in the Speech from the Throne the words "Baa, baa, black sheep," without being heard by anyone but the other party to the wager. Nothing quite so good—or should it be bad?—as that has occurred in an Australian Parliament, but one very-much-respected Governor of Victoria left out a whole page of the Speech prepared for him by Ministers. The Government sessional programme was printed on one side of the paper, and his Excellency had turned over two leaves instead of one. The Premier felt very much embarrassed, and hoped that nobody but himself had noticed the omission; but his hopes were three hours later dashed to atoms as soon as Mr. Speaker made the customary announcement that he had attended the opening ceremony in "another place," and that the Governor had delivered a Speech, of which "for greater accuracy," he had obtained a copy. A Ministerial supporter, who subsequently became a Minister, immediately rose and asked which Speech was to be discussed—the one of which "for greater accuracy" a copy had been obtained, or the one his Excellency had actually delivered, which contained a page less. A deep silence fell upon the Chamber, and "Hansard" judiciously omitted all reference to the question.

It was the same Governor who made a slip when reading a paragraph of another Speech. What Ministers had printed for him to announce was that a Bill would be introduced for the "conservation" of forests, but what his Excellency told the assemblage of eight hundred (members and visitors) was that a measure would be brought forward for the "conversation" of forests. One witty member of the Legislative Assembly, whose quick ear had detected the transposition of letters, said to a group of friends, "Ah! did you hear the great news? The Government is going to put tongues in trees, and, of course, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." As the head of the then Ministry was fond of boasting of its achievements—so much so that Mr. Watt, the ex-Premier, asked him impatiently one night, "Oh, who made the world?"—the comment was relished.

The orator in England who said, as he wiped away a tear, that he missed some of the old faces he used to shake hands with, was nearly matched by Mr. Edward Murphy, who, in the Victorian Legislative Assembly, assured members that Ballarat was the finest city south of the hemisphere; and by Mr. Matthews, who in the Federal House of Representatives used the phrase, "submerged on a pinnacle of materialistic vapour."

In the New South Wales Parliament there was a member named Willis (not the ex-Speaker), who was rather long-winded. One night he had spoken characteristically, and when he had sat down, Mr. Dickens, son of Charles Dickens, rose and said that he had been struck with the difference between the character his father had created, Barkis, and the hon. member who had just resumed his seat. As the House would remember, Barkis was willin', but Willis was barkin'!

Not quite so clever, but still above the commonplace, was the observation of a legislator when Sir W.H. Irvine, K.C., afterwards Commonwealth Attorney-General, was leader of the Victorian State Opposition. Sir W. Irvine's followers seemed to be rather cold towards him, and before the opening of the session no seats were "pegged" out on the front Opposition Bench. Observing the neglect, a minor light, parodying Moore, wrote:—

When true hearts are withered
And fond ones are flown,
Oh, who would inhabit
This bleak bench alone?

Sir James Patterson, when Premier of Victoria, went down to Port Campbell, scene of the *Loch Ard* wreck, to deliver an important speech. In the course of his address he remarked that it would be better for people if they would read more Bacon and eat less bacon. What appeared in an influential Melbourne paper was that it would be better for people if they would "rear" more bacon and eat less of it. The Premier was ruffled, and sent for the telegraph-operator (the Post Office was then under State Government control) and asked him what he meant by sending through such a "silly remark" and holding him up to ridicule. The officer, who is now Accountant of the Treasury, replied that the mistake was not his. He suggested diplomatically to the Premier that perhaps after all the "error" was not so bad, as people would think that he was advocating the rearing of pork for the development of an export trade. Mollified, Sir James told the operator that he would predict a successful career for him.

"BARKIS WAS WILLIN', BUT WILLIS WAS BARKIN'!"

A much more brilliant head of Government, when Treasurer, seriously informed a deputation when asked for a grant that he

had no Pandora's box into which to dip. Victoria was very thankful that he hadn't.

Usually a model Parliamentarian, Mr. Murray Smith, a former Agent-General in London, becoming nettled one night in the Victorian Legislative Assembly, said that Sir George Turner, the Premier, "stuck up with titles and hung round with strings," was not the same man as the "plain George Turner" they used to know, and he went on to quote: "Upon what meat does this our Cæsar feed that he has grown so great?" The late Mr. John Hancock, most genial of Labour members, who sat in the Ministerial corner, turned to a suburban representative and said in a "loud" whisper: "What's he want to put it that way for? Why doesn't he ask the Premier straight out, 'Who's your butcher?' and give the honest trader the advertisement he deserves?"

"HE TOLD ME, SIR, TO GO TO BLAZES!"

"SIR THOMAS BENT INTERPOSED."

In criticizing one night Sir James Patterson, the then Premier, the late Mr. Shiels was understood by most members to have said, "You coward!" but when, after the din had subsided, he continued, "I say you cowered before the blast of public opinion," there was laughter and cynical interjections. The verb was Parliamentary, but not the noun.

Speaking in the Federal House of Representatives, Mr. Hans Irvine said that the Ministerialists (the Labour Party) were like the fox in the fable: they had lost their tails, and they wanted the Opposition to lose theirs." Amidst loud laughter, Mr. Carr (Ministerialist) retorted: "You must be very primitive over there (the Opposition) if you haven't lost your tails yet."

A dignified elderly member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly was addressing the House one evening, when the impulsive representative of a metropolitan constituency interjected in a low tone. He gave some answer, and the city member made a snappish observation. The dignified member on his feet complained that he had been grossly insulted by the hon. member for ——. "What did he say?" queried Mr. Speaker. "He told me, sir—he told me, sir," proceeded the indignant one, in a tone as if what was said was too dreadful to mention, "to go—to go—to go to blazes!" Immediately there were cries from all over the Chamber, "Don't go! Don't go!"

In delivering his policy speech before the General Election (1913), when he was Opposition leader, Mr. Cook, the ex-Prime Minister of Australia, got rather mixed in his metaphor. Said he: "But what was wanted was a dose of medicine, and not this ruthless surgeon's knife of theirs (the Labour Party's), that would destroy federation and on its ruins build an edifice leading to socialism." A surgeon's knife for building purposes is not very helpful.

It was to Mr. Watt, the ex-Premier of Victoria, that a teacher wrote stating that he and his fellows must now appeal, if not to "the just eye of Heaven," to the "keen and vigilant eye of Mr. Watt, to grasp the nettle, call a halt, and compel the Education Department to return to the path of reason." An eye that can grasp a nettle is certainly no common one.

When he was Minister for Railways in the Irvine Government, Sir Thomas Bent, afterwards Premier of Victoria, spoiled the speech of a supporter of the Government, who, in referring disparagingly to one of the leaders of a constitutional reform movement, said that he was politically dead, and quoted the opening lines of "The Burial of Sir John Moore." He got as far as

"Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot,"

when Sir Thomas Bent interposed with the parody:—

"As we took him home
and put him to bed,
And told his wife and
his daughter
To give him next morning a couple of red
Herrings and soda-water."

The address was cut short.

For the space of two or three minutes Mr. Murray, who shortly afterwards became Acting Premier of Victoria,* fooled the Legislative Assembly most successfully when he was a private member. He was speaking on the Address-in-Reply, and made a reference which the whole House thought was to the Earl of Hopetoun, who had just given up the Governorship amidst the regrets of the people, after six years' residence. While the thoughts of members ran towards his lordship, Mr. Murray's were elsewhere. Said he:—

"I, OF COURSE, ALLUDE TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS, THE INCOMPARABLE, THE UNVANQUISHED 'CARBINE.'"

"Not having reason to drag in the Mother Country and those who sit above the Mother Parliament, I think that the opportunity might have been taken to fill up the gap by

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, MELBOURNE.

* Mr. Murray died in May, 1916.

some allusion to the loss of one who, although not born in Australia, had so endeared himself during his six years' residence here to the people of this country that he had become their idol. . . . I don't wish to remind honourable members of the anguish we all felt when he severed his connection with this land. I can pay him the honest tribute of the high opinion I hold of the many splendid qualities that distinguish him above all others of his race, characteristics that were worthy of his lineage. I, of course, allude to the illustrious, the incomparable, the unvanquished *Carbine*."

The last word evoked a wild shout of laughter. Instead of the Earl of Hopetoun (afterwards Marquess of Linlithgow), Mr. Murray was alluding to the departure for England of the Melbourne Cup winner, and cynically touching up his countrymen on their worship of the racehorse.

HOW TO MAKE A MODEL SUBMARINE.

Written and Illustrated by

S. LEONARD BASTIN.

IT is not difficult to make a model submarine. This toy, if constructed on the lines indicated, is wonderfully like the real thing. It will dive under water and travel beneath the surface for a distance of thirty yards, or even farther. The money outlay involved need not be more than a few pence, seeing that the submarine can be almost entirely made out of odds and ends to be found in any house.

FIG. 1.—THE PROPELLER AND FINS.

The first thing to get is a rounded piece of wood. This may be about eight inches long and two and a half inches in diameter. The softer the wood the easier it will be to cut. The toy shown in the photograph (Fig. 4) was made out of a bit of curtain-pole, and this answered the purpose in all ways. Now take a sharp knife and cut the ends of the piece of wood to points. Do this as evenly as possible. When the business is finished the length of wood will look somewhat like a cigar. It is a good plan to rub the wood down with glass-paper so that it is nice and smooth.

FIG. 2.—HOW THE PROPELLER IS FIXED ON TO THE ELASTIC.

The next step is to bore a hole right through from end to end of the piece of wood. This can be done with a gimlet, starting the boring from both ends and meeting in the middle; or the hole may be burned out with a red-hot knitting-needle. In this case there is no danger of cracking the wood. The openings at the ends of the piece of wood should be widened out somewhat so that they will take two small pieces of tin tubing. The best thing for this purpose is a pea-shooter—to be bought for a halfpenny. Two portions about an inch in length are cut off. These should project a little from the wood.

The submarine must be provided with a propeller and also three fins. These may be cut with a pair of scissors out of tin lids. The designs of the propeller and of the fins are shown in the illustration (Fig. 1). Note that at the straight edge of the fins there should be two little projecting pieces that can be pressed into the wood to hold the tin shape firmly in place. The fan-shaped pieces of the propeller must be slightly twisted, so that the whole thing resembles the propeller of a real ship. We shall now require a piece of elastic; that sort which is used for making catapults will answer the purpose well. This should be somewhat more than double the length of the piece of wood. Bore two holes through the propeller and pass the elastic through these. Now get a big glass bead, a bit bigger in diameter than the tin tubing which we cut from the pea-shooter. Thread the two ends of the elastic through the bead and then pass the thread right through the hole in the hull of the submarine (Fig. 2). For the other end of the boat make a small handle out of a bent hairpin, and, when the elastic has been drawn through the hole rather tightly, fix it on to this in the manner shown in the illustration (Fig. 3). Next make two little notches in the tube at the handle-end of the boat, so that, after winding, this is held in such a way that the elastic will not untwist. The driving-power of the toy-submarine may now be tested. Hold the propeller with one hand and turn the handle until the elastic has acquired a good tension. Fix up the handle in the notch in the tube, and then release the propeller. This goes round at a great rate. If the boat is placed on water, the propeller drives it along, but as yet the model is not a submarine, seeing that it floats along the surface.

FIG. 3.—HOW THE ELASTIC IS LOOPED ROUND THE HANDLE.

To make the toy dive, and keep submerged, the following steps must be taken. Take a strip of sheet-lead, or a bit of tubing beaten flat, and fasten this on the bottom of the

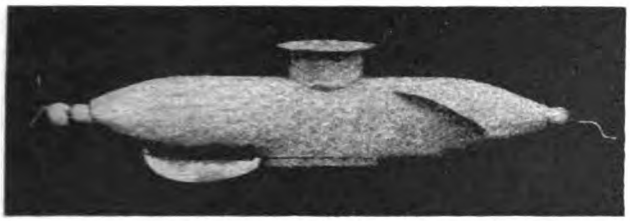


FIG. 4.—THE MODEL SUBMARINE WHEN COMPLETE.

submarine. This should be of such a weight that, when in position, the top of the boat is only just above the surface. Next, the fins must be put in place. A straight one is placed on the bottom as shown in the photograph (Fig. 4). The other two are put one on either side of the nose of the boat—that is, the end where the handle is. These two should be just a little bit waved. The small projection at the ends of the fins will serve to fix them firmly into the wood.

Another trial-trip may now be made, the elastic being wound up in the same way as before. Holding the propeller, place the submarine well below the surface of the water (Fig. 5). Then release the hold on the propeller and watch the result. At first the little boat may try to rise, but as the speed is increased it rushes along beneath the water just like a fish. It will then be realized what an interesting little toy has been made. Where the elastic is strong, the boat would travel a distance of forty yards, and it is great fun; try it on a pond. A piece of shaped wood may be added at the top by way of a conning-tower, and the whole thing painted a dull grey to give a realistic effect.

FIG. 5.—SUBMERGING THE SUBMARINE.

A FORERUNNER OF THE ZEPPELIN.

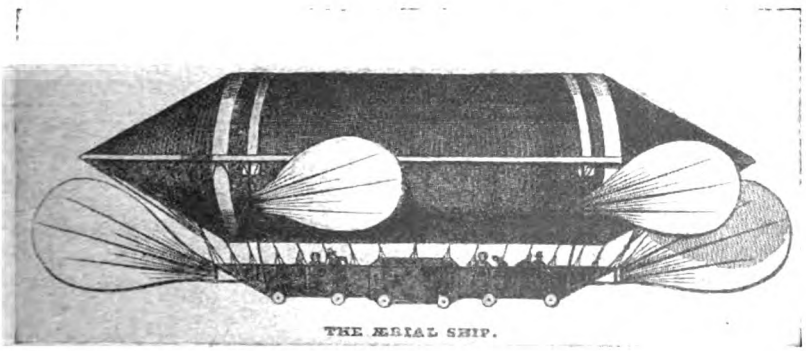
THIS curious design and description of an early, if not the first, aerial ship appears in an old monthly magazine, entitled the *New Belle Assemblée*, of September, 1835. It was then nearing completion, and thus would have been in process of construction between eighty and a hundred years ago. The account, apparently from the editorial pen, is as follows:—

"We have been favoured, through the politeness of the proprietor, Count Lennox, with the accompanying representation of this stupendous machine—the only *correct* one, we can assure our readers, hitherto presented to the public, though numerous unauthorized sketches and caricatures of this ingenious vehicle have been put forth by ignorant or interested persons, more for the purpose of bringing the system of aerial navigation into ridicule than of affording any real information to the curious. Every invention must have a beginning and have the rocks and shoals of prejudice to surmount ere it can be brought to perfection.

"This singular traveller upon the pathless fields of air is being fitted out for its first voyage at Kensington. The ordinary spherical balloon is from its shape wholly at the mercy of the winds, whereas the aerial ship is capable of direction.

"Count Lennox, the inventor, wisely turning to Nature for a model, found one in the fish, and, in fact, his work should be called the Aerial Leviathan, or the Great Air Serpent. Its body is oblong, some hundred and sixty feet long, sixty feet high, and forty feet wide. The portable gas cylinder would convey an idea of its shape to anyone who has not seen the likeness of it in miniature. At either end it runs off to a point. This vast reservoir contains two hundred thousand cubic feet of gas, and is made with silk and cotton mixed, thoroughly varnished with india rubber, so as to be perfectly air-tight.

"It may ascend into the air with a buoyancy of fifteen thousand pounds being filled with pure hydrogen, and one of ten thousand pounds only being filled with common coal-gas.



THE AERIAL SHIP.

"The weight of all the materials employed and of the whole machinery is about three thousand pounds, so it may really carry up in the air, besides its own weight, a crew or cargo varying from seven thousand to twelve thousand pounds, according to the purity of the hydrogen.

"If the wind should prove only slightly contrary, Count Lennox hopes to keep his course by means of two wings or fins at each side of the vessel, of broad superficies and light construction, and also by means of two fan-tails, one behind and another before, the one behind intended to act after the manner of the tail of a fish, and the one before to help the motion of the other by acting contraryways. These two fan-tails are fastened, not to the great air cylinder itself, but to the machine in which the voyagers take their places, and which, being made of network, and as little solid material as possible, is suspended beneath, and very close to the gasometer. It is long and narrow, and holds the machinery for working the wings or fins and the two rudders. If the wind proves very contrary, Count Lennox does not intend to struggle against it, but to ascend into another stratum of air to find another current, or descend towards the earth for the same purpose. It may be remarked that, by a partial ascent or descent, an unfavourable may be changed for a favourable current.

"One of the most satisfactory parts of the whole arrangement of the machine is that which renders ascent and descent perfectly easy. Here again the economy of the fish's construction is had recourse to. Within the vessel is an air balloon, to correspond with the air bladder of a fish. This can be filled or exhausted at pleasure by very simple means. If it be filled with atmospheric air, the gas in the cylinder may be compressed to such a degree that, what with the ballast in the boat, the whole machine becomes specifically heavier than the air around it, and it descends accordingly.

"An inflator of simple construction is carried in the boat. Thus the airship may travel as near to the earth as the voyagers may desire. Should they wish to ascend, the air balloon is exhausted, the gas expands, the cylinder is of less specific gravity than the air, and it rises.

"Count Lennox calculates on being ready for his first trial by the end of the present month. He is but making an experiment in which he deserves encouragement. He intends generally to go with the currents, and not at all against them."

In view of our air service to-day, this is strange and quaint reading, but it is impossible for us not to recognize the debt of gratitude we owe the pioneers of this great work, who, in face of supreme difficulty and apparent failure, truly paved the way for those who came after them.

A LAMP THAT SINGS.

A LAMP that sings and talks and does all the other things that we expect from a high-class phonograph has been developed by a New York inventor. This device, which is called a phono-lite, combines a practical and artistic reading-lamp for the library-table with that universal entertainer, the talking-machine. When not in use for the latter purpose, there is nothing to indicate that it is anything more or less than an artistic lamp, formed of metal and carrying a silk shade over a ground-glass diffuser. By raising the hood a trifle, the phonograph is disclosed, a machine that plays any record disc up to and including the twelve-inch size. Instead of the horn as a sound-diffuser, the stem of the lamp is utilized, and the glass shade which surrounds the bulb is funnel-shaped, acting as a horn. The operation of the phonograph does not conflict with the lighting, as two switches control the lamp and the mechanism that plays the phonograph and rewinds it. It is believed that the novel combination will find favour with people who dislike the appearance of the common type of talking-machine, with its obtrusive horn; while the fact that it takes up no additional space will make it welcome where a bulky cabinet-type phonograph would find no room.

LEST YOU FORGET!

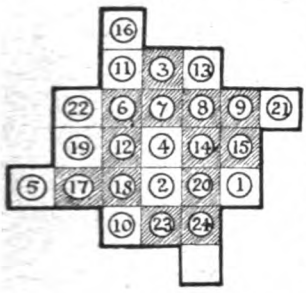
DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

361.—A KNIGHT'S MOVE PUZZLE.

MAKE a rough diagram on a sheet of paper, in the manner shown, and place twenty-four numbered counters in the positions indicated. The puzzle is to get the counters into numerical order by moving them one at a time in knight's moves. No. 1 should be where 16 is, 2 where 11 is, 4 where 13 is, and so on. It will be seen that all the counters on shaded squares are in their proper positions. Obviously the first move must be by 1, 2, or 10, to the vacant square, then the next move must be by 23, 4, 8, or 21, and so on. As there is never more than one square vacant, the order in which the counters move may be written out as follows: 1, 21, 14, 18, 22, etc. Now, can you perform the feat of getting them in order in the fewest possible moves?

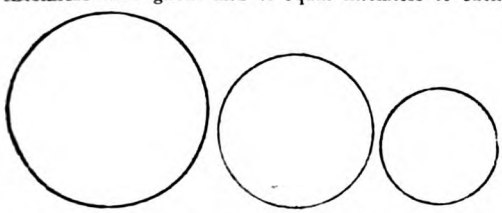


362.—THE THREE GARDEN BEDS.

I HAVE three small square garden beds of different sizes. The middle-sized one contains exactly five square feet more than the smallest, and the largest contains exactly five square feet more than the middle-sized one. Can you give exact dimensions for the three beds?

363.—THE BUN PUZZLE.

PROBABLY few readers of these pages have seen my old bun puzzle, so I will reproduce it. The three circles represent three buns, and it is simply required to show how these may be equally divided among four boys. The buns must be regarded as of equal thickness throughout and of equal thickness to each other. They must be cut into as few pieces as possible. To simplify it I will state the rather surprising fact that only five pieces are necessary, from which it will be seen that one boy gets his share in two pieces and the others receive theirs in a single piece. I am aware that this statement somewhat "gives away" the puzzle, but it should not destroy its interest to those who like to discover the "reason why."



364.—MORE ABOUT HENS.

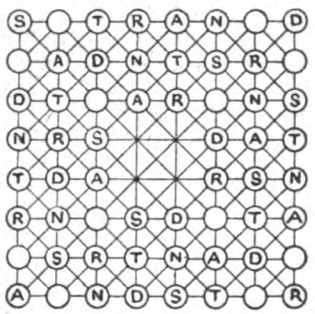
A CORRESPONDENT sends me the following new variation of an old friend. Though it looks rather complicated and difficult, it is absurdly easy if properly attacked. But I am sure it will interest and amuse my readers. If a hen and a half lays an egg and a half in a day and a half, how many and a half who lay better by half will lay half a score and a half in a week and a half?

365.—A CRYPTIC WORD.

HERE is a well-known English word. Can you read it? E1010001000100OUN1100ATXN.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

356.—A "STRAND" PUZZLE.



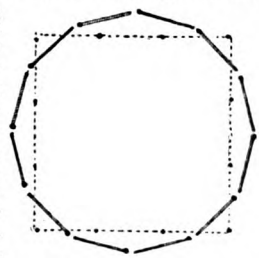
THE illustration shows how the letters of "STRAND" may be placed, each letter eight times, so that no letter is on the same line as a similar letter.

357.—THE BOAT-RACE CREW.

ANY combination must fall into one of the following groups: (1) Where all the stroke men are taken from the five, giving 75 arrangements. (2) Where only one of the two is stroke, giving 50. (3) Where the other one of the two is stroke, giving 10. (4) Where both of the two are stroke, giving 10 arrangements. There are thus 145 different selections in all. Many will give the answer as 185, overlooking the fact that in 40 cases in class (3) the same eight men would be rowing as in class (2), though the pair would be on different sides.

358.—HURDLES AND SHEEP.

IF the enclosure is to be rectangular, the nearer the rectangle approaches to the form of a square the greater will be the area. But the greatest area of all will always be when the hurdles are arranged in the form of a regular polygon, inscribed in a circle, and if this can be done in more than one way the greatest area will be when there are as many sides as hurdles. Thus, the hexagon given last month had a greater area than the triangle. The twelve-sided figure or regular dodecagon therefore encloses the largest possible area for twelve hurdles—room for about eleven sheep and one-fifth. Eleven hurdles would only accommodate a maximum of about nine and nine-twenty-fifths, so that twelve hurdles are necessary for ten sheep. If you arrange the hurdles in the form of a square, as shown by the dotted lines, you only get room for nine sheep.



359.—THE THREE BROTHERS.

ARTHUR could do the work in $14\frac{24}{48}$ days, Benjamin in $17\frac{23}{41}$ days, and Charles in $23\frac{7}{31}$ days.

360.—A WORD SQUARE.

S A G E S
A D A G E
G A U G E
E G G E D
S E E D Y

CATS AND DOGS.

By BARRY PAIN.

Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

WHEN Mr. Herbert Wilson died, his wife said that there was no longer any necessity for her to live in London. For twenty years past she had lived principally in London. Her husband's practice as a solicitor had required it, and she herself had been a distinctly sociable person, having many friends and many enjoyments. But after Herbert's death she felt tired. Poor dear Herbert during the last few years of his life had been very tiring. He was a nervous invalid, and one nervous invalid is capable of lowering the vitality of ten strong dray-horses, if brought into social contact with them. She spoke of his death as a release, and so it was. Herbert was not the only person released.

She decided to live in the country, of which she knew very little. The phrase "old-world garden," not infrequent in the house-agents' advertisements, attracted her. She had always been fond of flowers, and had got them in great perfection and at considerable cost at the shop in Piccadilly. That was the limit of her knowledge. She knew nothing of their culture. Her nature was distinctly a town nature, and she did not in her heart believe that wild animals, such as cows, ought to be allowed on the public roads. That did not matter. She was much too old for dancing. She was weary of dining out. The theatres were all too preposterously bad. London was a dirty hole, and the peace of the clean country attracted her.

She found in the end just what she wanted. Many house-agents had done their utmost for her, and, incidentally, for themselves. Her many friends had made many inquiries in many directions. At last, on a fine morning in May, she saw Buckle's Farm, and decided that this was really It.

It had many advantages. To start with, it was not a farm at all. It had in the days of George IV., when it was built, been a farm-house. It had been last occupied by somebody with Mrs. Wilson's own taste for properly modified rusticity. It had electric light, company's water, two bathrooms, and a telephone. The lower rooms of the house were all panelled. The only ground attached to it consisted of three acres of walled garden, and that garden was almost ostentatiously old-world. It had flagged paths. The previous owner had seen to this, and had been careful to arrange for moss and flowering plants in the crevices of the stones. Every thoughtful house-agent knows that this is distinctly an old-world feature. It had a beautiful stone sundial, which looked as if it had been there ever since the house was built, and, as a matter of fact, had been bought in Great Portland Street about six years previously. There was a fountain (by arrangement with the water company), and goldfish swam in the pool below. "The goldfish have to be renewed occasionally," the previous owner had confessed. Yes, the place was full of charm, but somewhat sophisticated: in both these respects it resembled its new owner, Mrs. Wilson.

Buckle's Farm was a little over a mile from the railway station, and an excellent train service took one to London in just under the hour—not that that mattered, of course. At the end of six months Mrs. Wilson was able to declare, and did declare with suspicious frequency, that she had never once been to London since she had taken up her residence at the farm. Simply hadn't thought about it.

It must be admitted that to some extent London had come to Mrs. Wilson. She had so many friends, and it is impossible to drop all your friends. The spare bedrooms at Buckle's Farm were generally occupied during the week-ends in the summer. Mrs. Wilson was unable to get the London morning papers before ten, and she was very apologetic to her guests about this inconvenience; in her secret heart she gloried in it. It seemed such absolute and convincing proof that she was really quite out of the world.

And then came the simply disgusting discovery that in the country there is a succession of the seasons. As at present arranged, the winter comes after the summer. The garden began to look much less beautiful. As the

result of a severe frost, the plumber had to be called in to attend the charming fountain, and Mrs. Wilson decided not to renew the goldfish again until the spring. The cement used in the construction of one of the flag-paths went deplorably wrong, and Mrs. Wilson realized that it takes a lot of trouble to keep up in an old-world place a decent amount of decay without decrepitude. The evenings were long, and she could not spend every evening with the Hendersons, or the Mackels, or any of her other friends in the neighbourhood. She enlarged her library subscription. She burned great logs of wood in an open fireplace, and derived some satisfaction from knowing, and letting others know, that she did it. On several occasions she said bravely, but inaccurately, that, though she always loved the country, she thought she loved it most in the winter. Her friends in London did not, perhaps, share this view. They all longed for another delightful week-end at Buckle's Farm, but, what with one thing and another, they seemed unable to arrange it before the following spring. At Christmas her house was full, but at the end of January she began to read "Robinson Crusoe," with more sympathy for that pious fraud than she had ever felt in her childhood.

One afternoon Lady Mackel looked in about tea-time, and Lady Mackel did not play the game at all.

"Pretty rotten down here in the winter, isn't it?" said Lady Mackel. "I am making George take me up to the Carlton for a week. He says he can't afford it, which is probably true, but I told him that if I stopped here without a change I should probably go mad and drown myself in the beastly old moat."

The moat was quite genuine and authentic. Mrs. Wilson had often envied it.

"Why don't you go and stop with some of your relatives in London?"

"Oh, no. Not for me. Nor for George. We did a pious week of that at Christmas, but this time I want a real holiday, and to get a real holiday one must have freedom. There is nothing I hate more than considering other people's feelings, and making allowances, and all that sort of thing. Mind, I can do it when I must, but you can't pretend there is any sport about it. Why don't you shut this old shanty up for a week, and come along too?"

"It would be delightful," said Mrs. Wilson. "But, you know, I love the country even more in the winter than in the summer."

"Rot, my dear. You don't. Nobody does—at least not this sort of country. I wouldn't like it to be generally known, but we are as nearly as possible in a suburb. Don't you get tired of being always alone here?"

"No, Jane, I don't think so. Of course, sometimes one wishes that more things would happen. But I don't really want excitement. Besides, one is not entirely alone. People do come down to see one."

"I know. Relatives will go anywhere. But it's my experience that when you have got them you wish you hadn't."

"To-morrow I've got two women coming down from London to lunch with me, and they are not relatives. They are not even friends. I never saw either of them in my life before. You had better come along, too, don't you think?"

"It sounds a little dangerous. How did you come to do it? Of course, one does get pretty desperate in this dead-alive place."

"It was more or less forced on me. One of them is a Miss Colt—Isabel Colt she signs herself. She is doing tremendously good work. She runs happy evenings for school children in London, and she wrote to me for a subscription. A friend of mine gave her my address."

"The way one's friends give away one's address is simply shocking," said Lady Mackel, with conviction.

"I thought," said Mrs. Wilson, a little hesitatingly, "that this was a case where perhaps one might give one's personal services and not merely money. The great drawback is that, if I consented to do anything of the kind, it would take me up to London occasionally. I love this quiet spot even more in winter than in summer."

"You said that before."

"Did I really? Well, anyhow, Miss Colt is coming here to-morrow morning, and as the best train arrives just after twelve, I simply had to ask her to lunch."

"I see. And who is your other pal?"

"She is a Miss Waterbrook, and I am told she is very clever. "She is doing a series of articles called 'Interesting Homes.' It comes out in some magazine or other. She wants to do an article on Buckle's Farm. You'd like to meet her?"

"No, my dear. She had the cheek to write to us, wanting to do an article about our place, and it annoyed George quite a good deal. He refused on a postcard. I didn't read it, but I wouldn't mind betting that it was rude. She is one of those persistent people who want to poke their noses in everywhere. Yes, I am sorry for you. You've done the Christian

"SHE SAW TWO LADIES SEATED AS FAR APART AS THE DIMENSIONS OF THE ROOM WOULD ALLOW."

and kindly thing, and, of course, you are going to be punished for it."

Mrs. Wilson laughed. "Oh, it won't be so bad really. I think I have been rather smart in working them both off at the same time. And perhaps I sha'n't let Miss Waterbrook write about this place after all. If I don't like her, I can always send her on to some friend who has got a still more interesting home."

"You've got absolutely no conscience. I am going to leave your contaminating presence. But do come round and see us afterwards, and tell us how you get on with these wild women."

At twenty past twelve next day Mrs. Wilson was out in her garden at the back of the house, telling her gardener various things that he knew before, while he listened with an air of respectful attention. After all, it made a useful break in the day's work, and nobody could grumble at it.

A maid came out of the house to tell her that Miss Waterbrook was in the drawing-room.

"Very good," said Mrs. Wilson. "Tell her that I won't keep her a minute."

She resumed and completed her instructions to the gardener, and walked slowly up towards the house. As she neared it, the maid came out once more to say that Miss Colt had arrived and was also in the drawing-room. At the same time Mrs. Wilson became conscious of curious noises. There seemed to be evidence that somewhere in the proximity a healthy dog-fight was taking place.

The maid also heard those noises.

"Both the ladies had little dogs with them," she said, explanatorily.

"All right," said Mrs. Wilson. "Never mind. I'll see to it."

She paused a moment outside the drawing-room door. It sounded a little as if the dog-fight were dying down and a cat-fight had taken its place. One woman was speaking in loud and determined tones, the other in aggrieved and plaintive. They both spoke at once, and seemed to have more to say than they could compress into the time. At intervals two dogs yapped furiously. Mrs. Wilson opened the door and entered.

She saw before her two ladies, seated as far apart as the dimensions of the room would allow. One of them came very near to being fat. She held under her arm a black Pekingese. A useful working arrangement seemed to have been arrived at between them by which, when Miss Waterbrook stopped to pant the dog began to yap, and when the dog stopped to pant Miss Waterbrook resumed her discourse.

The other lady, Miss Colt, instrumental in giving so many happy evenings to so many children, was at present restraining on a lead something that might very easily have been mistaken for an Irish terrier. The terrier seemed upset, very much as if he had been interrupted in some half-finished work. Portions of black fluff on the carpet indicated

what the work had been. Miss Colt was still speaking continuously, sometimes to the dog and sometimes to Miss Waterbrook, and sometimes confusing the two.

Both the ladies rose as Mrs. Wilson entered.

"I am so sorry this should have happened, Mrs. Wilson," said Miss Waterbrook, breathlessly, "but this lady here most deliberately set her dog—if you can call it a dog——"

At the same time Miss Colt said, "I am only too grieved, Mrs. Wilson, but I cannot blame myself. A quieter dog than Peter when he is not——"

Peter resented any imputation of quietness. He explained in a loud voice that he wished to devour what was left of the black Pekingese, wipe out Miss Waterbrook, and then clear the house of other obstructions, including Mrs. Wilson. At the same time the Pekingese explained rapidly in the Chinese language that he desired to be set down in order that he might show what he could do when he was not taken unexpectedly.

Both the ladies shook hands with Mrs. Wilson, and she attempted to say soothing things. She was quite inaudible. Miss Colt and Miss Waterbrook continued to address Mrs. Wilson, each other, and their respective dogs in a very deluge of words. Mrs. Wilson was faintly conscious of splashes of it, rendered entirely without punctuation. It arrived somewhat in this form:—

"Of course I have never met this lady before—yap yap yap—what really happened was—yappity yappity yappity—I said to her—be quiet you brute—of course her dog was simply looking for trouble and you can't expect a well-bred Irish terrier to stand still when its hind leg is being chewed by a demented pom—yappity yappity yappity yap—not one word of truth in the whole of that statement and the mere fact that she does not know the difference between a pom and a Pekingese shows conclusively—but all the same I must really apologize to you Mrs. Wilson and if this lady happens to be a personal friend of yours—nobody has any business to take out a tiger not under control—Chang do keep quiet for a moment—yappity yappity—large masses of his coat torn out as you can see for yourself on the carpet and it may be weeks before—all I wanted to point out was not fit to have the care of a canary much less a dog—yap yap yappity—if you would kindly not interrupt when I am speaking—until I have a chance to—shall certainly take my legal remedy—the facts are perfectly plain and no attempt on her part—yap yap yap—what I want you to see is—what I really regret is—what is perfectly obvious is—if you will kindly let me speak—if you will oblige me by not interrupting."

There came one moment of absolute silence, due to total exhaustion. Two dogs and two ladies panted heavily. Mrs. Wilson took advantage of the moment.

"So sorry!" she said. "It's my maid's fault really. When she saw you both had dogs with you she should have shown you into different rooms. Now, what are we to do? I don't really know either of you, but I had hoped that you would both meet here and——"

"Impossible!" said Miss Waterbrook and Miss Colt, simultaneously.

"Then I'll tell you what we'll do. One of you will stop now, and the other would perhaps be kind enough to come and see me some other day."

"Thank you very much," said Miss Waterbrook. "I could not possibly do myself justice if I remained. I have been too much upset by this outrage; for which, of course, I know that you are not responsible, Mrs. Wilson. Writing as I do for something like a million and a half of readers, I feel it my duty to give them the best that is in me, and in the circumstances——"

"On the contrary," said Miss Colt, "it is I who will go. I have the interests of millions of poor children to consider, and I cannot pursue my efforts to bring a ray of sunshine into their unhappy lives while I am——"

"Will you be good enough to be quiet?" said Miss Waterbrook. "Mrs. Wilson and I have already settled this matter. Goodbye, Mrs. Wilson. I will try to make an appointment for some day when you are not seeing applicants for the housemaid's place."

"Vulgar impertinence, fortunately, has no effect upon me," said Miss Colt. She would have continued, but she was too late. Miss Waterbrook had already passed out into the hall. Mrs. Wilson of necessity followed. There was only one course open for Miss Colt. She burst into a flood of hysterical tears. The alleged Irish terrier sat up and sang a dismal psalm in E minor.

Mrs. Wilson, returning from her farewell of Miss Waterbrook, found Miss Colt still slightly hysterical, but absolutely determined. The terrier had given up contrition for the moment and was trying to eat a piece of coal.

Miss Colt refused all offers of hospitality. She must go at once. She recognized that it was not Mrs. Wilson's fault, and would make another appointment. But she was not really

in a condition then to explain her efforts to bring that little ray of sunshine as stated.

Mrs. Wilson allowed her to go, and then rang the bell.

"I find I shall be alone at lunch after all," she said to the maid. "Those two ladies decided not to stop. I suppose they will catch the one-fifteen all right?"

"I don't think so, madam. The one-fifteen is Saturdays excepted."

"So it is. Oh, well, then, they will catch some other train. There's a lot of black fluff on the carpet. Just see to it."

Mrs. Wilson went out into the garden. She did not lunch till half-past one, and she had time for reflection. She happened by chance to reflect on the extreme foolishness of asking two people to meet one another when you did not know them and they did not know each other. Her reflections were interrupted by her maid.

"One of those ladies has come back again, madam."

"Good heavens! Which one?"

"Miss Waterbrook—the rather stout lady with the little black dog."

"LARGE MASSES OF HIS COAT TORN OUT AS YOU CAN SEE FOR YOURSELF."

Mrs. Wilson went into the house to see her, and found her smiling and composed.

"I am sure," said Miss Waterbrook, "that you will forgive me for this little piece of strategy. That Miss Colt, or whatever her name is, was absolutely in the wrong, of course, but one has a certain amount of pride. I was not going to let her confer a favour on me by being the one to withdraw. So instead of going to the station I turned up the hill, and watched till I saw her safely off the premises."

"That was frightfully clever of you," said Mrs. Wilson, politely. "So I sha'n't have to lunch alone after all."

"It's so good of you to let me stay. As a matter of fact, my little article about your beautiful home has to be in the printer's hands by Monday, and so there would have been no time for another appointment."

"Good," said Mrs. Wilson. "I shall just have time to show you the garden before lunch."

Miss Waterbrook went into the garden and also into ecstasies. She admired everything intensely. She said that it was just like stepping down into the eighteenth century. The absolute peace of it was wonderful.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Wilson, "that most people would think it far more beautiful in the summer, though I personally love the country even better in the winter. The sundial has an interesting motto on it. You might like to make a note of it."

Miss Waterbrook made her note. Chang, the little black Pekingese, frisked about happily, forgetful of past sufferings. The sun shone. All nature smiled. And then something terrific happened.

When Miss Colt arrived at the station she made the discovery that the one-fifteen did not run on Saturdays, and that there was no up-train before four-twenty. Her first impulse was to go to the little station hotel for luncheon. But she was a clever and

thoughtful woman. As there was no sign of Miss Waterbrook on the station platform, it seemed to her practically certain that Miss Waterbrook had gone to that hotel for lunch. It would be extremely unpleasant to meet her again. Also, by this time Miss Colt had recovered her composure. Why pay two railway fares when one can be made to serve the purpose? Mrs. Wilson did not lunch till half-past one, and there would be just time to get back to Buckle's Farm. The train service would be an excellent excuse. So she went back. Her terrier released from the lead, seemed to delight in his freedom.

"THE DOG-FIGHT IN THE DRAWING-ROOM WAS BUT A PALE SHADOW OF THE DOG-FIGHT THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE GARDEN."

Miss Colt and the terrier entered the drive at the moment when Miss Waterbrook was closing the notebook with the inscription in it. The two ladies began with great promptitude, but in spite of that the two dogs started first. The dog-fight in the drawing-room was but a pale shadow of the dog-fight that took place in the garden. The Pekingese did better than might have been expected, but the terrier was too strong and heavy for him. The arrival of the gardener saved the situation.

The matter had gone now beyond mere recrimination. Miss Waterbrook, clasping a wounded Pekingese to her considerable frontage, was yet able to make a note of Miss Colt's name and address and to assure her that the matter would be placed in the hands of her solicitors. Miss Colt, restraining a perturbed terrier with the crook of her umbrella through its collar, made a note of Miss Waterbrook's name and address, and assured her that the usual action for damages would now be inevitable.

Mrs. Wilson lunched alone after all.

On Sunday, as they came out of church, Lady Mackel tackled her.

"How did your freak luncheon-party go off?" she asked.

"I am going to London for a few days after all," said Mrs. Wilson.

And it was more of an answer to the question than it sounded.

"That's splendid," said Lady Mackel. "We'll have great larks."

"I'm not going for larks."

"What then?"

"Me? I am going for a rest cure."

And then, being urgently required to do so, she explained further.

One Arabian Night.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By ELSIE C. DILL.

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson.

JACK and I were walking along the shore at low tide when we saw a queer copper pot lying on its side. It was very heavy, and as we stood it upright we noticed that the mouth was closed with lead.

"Doesn't it remind you of the copper pot the fisherman found?" asked Jack, staring at it intently. "You know, the chap in the 'Arabian Nights' who went fishing and caught a dead donkey and other rubbish. And then he drew up a copper pot with a genie inside, and had no end of a good time."

Of course I remembered the tale, and said so, and we bent down to have another look.

"See, Geoff," cried Jack, excitedly, "here is the impression of a seal on the lid. I'm sure there must be something inside, or why should the pot be fastened up so tightly? Let's open it and chance what happens."

"Wait a bit," I said. "When the fisherman opened his pot, didn't the genie thirst for his blood and threaten to kill him? Now suppose there is a genie in our pot, how are we going to manage him?"

"Why, easily enough," replied my twin. "We'll raise the lid the least little bit, and if any smoke comes out, as it did in the 'Arabian Nights,' we'll bottle up the genie and think things over."

So we knelt down on the sand, and with the help of Jack's knife loosened the leaden lid with the seal on it. Very slowly Jack drew it out of the mouth of the pot. Suddenly a blinding column of smoke rushed out of the vessel, full in Jack's face.

"Quick, Geoff!" he shouted. "Jam the lid in! It's a genie after all." And I jammed it in, you may be sure.

When our eyes had stopped smarting from the smoke, we turned to the copper pot again, and what do you think we saw?

On the edge of the pot a huge head was balancing itself, whirling round and round at express speed. Four horns stuck out of its shaggy hair and its face was as ugly as a nightmare.

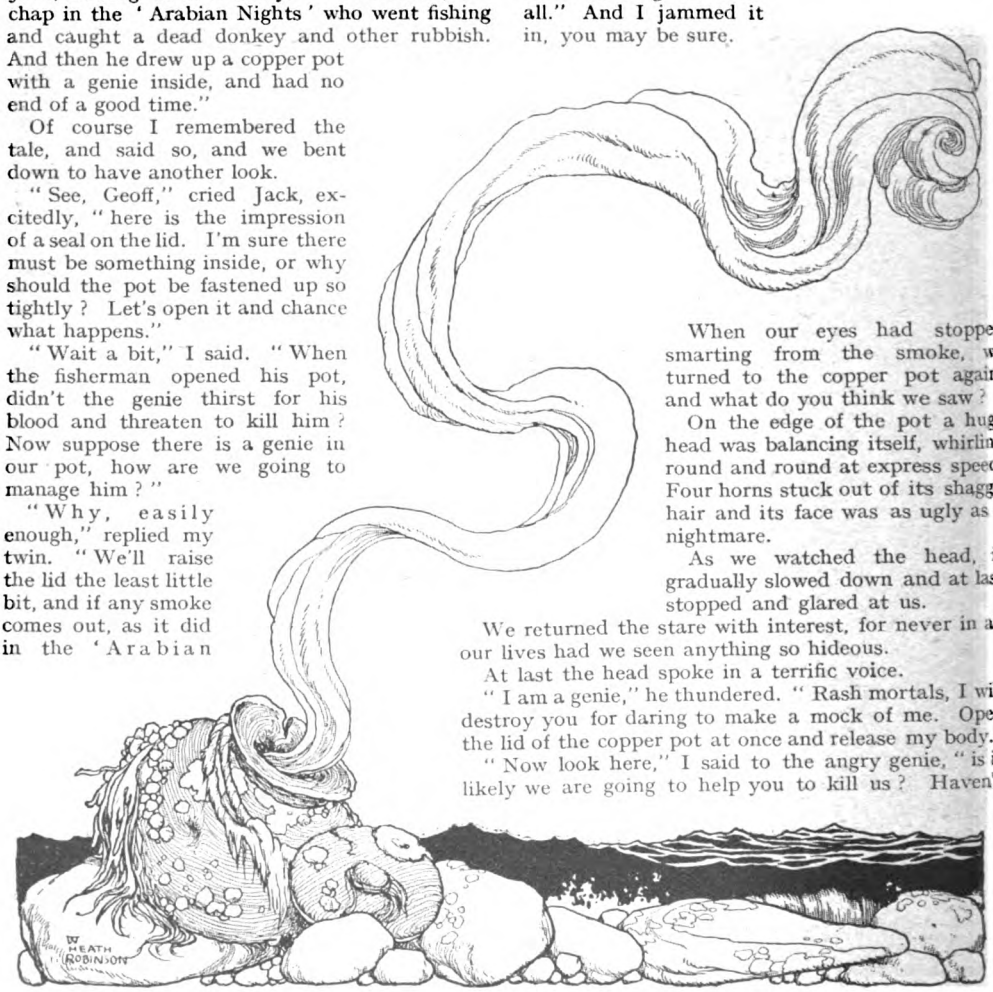
As we watched the head, it gradually slowed down and at last stopped and glared at us.

We returned the stare with interest, for never in all our lives had we seen anything so hideous.

At last the head spoke in a terrific voice.

"I am a genie," he thundered. "Rash mortals, I will destroy you for daring to make a mock of me. Open the lid of the copper pot at once and release my body."

"Now look here," I said to the angry genie, "is it likely we are going to help you to kill us? Haven't



"TOSSING US ONE ON TO EACH SHOULDER, THE GENIE ROSE IN THE AIR."

you the sense to see that you are at our mercy, and we can do as we like with you ? "

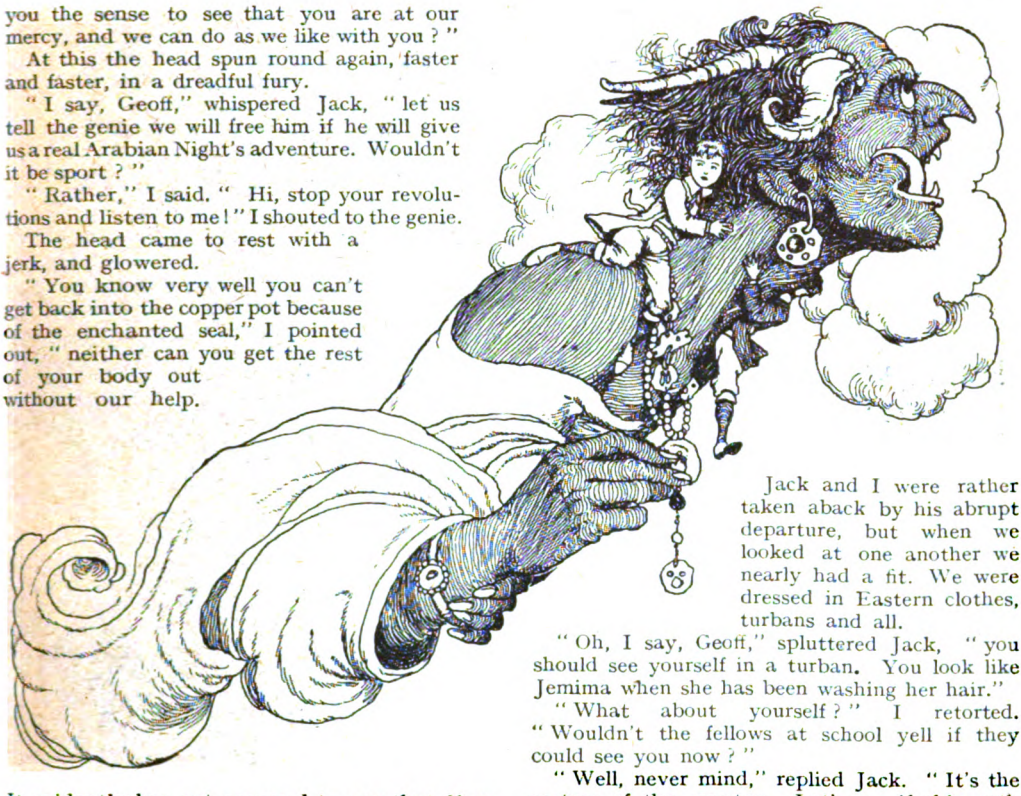
At this the head spun round again, faster and faster, in a dreadful fury.

" I say, Geoff," whispered Jack, " let us tell the genie we will free him if he will give us a real Arabian Night's adventure. Wouldn't it be sport ? "

" Rather," I said. " Hi, stop your revolutions and listen to me ! " I shouted to the genie.

The head came to rest with a jerk, and glowered.

" You know very well you can't get back into the copper pot because of the enchanted seal," I pointed out, " neither can you get the rest of your body out without our help.



It evidently has not occurred to you that if we leave you here you will be drowned at high tide."

It had not occurred to him ; we could tell by the look in his eye as he twirled round to gaze at the rising tide.

" Now if you will give us a real Arabian Night's adventure, and swear not to harm us, we will release you," I finished.

" I swear by all the gods in earth, air, and sea," said the genie, " that you shall have the adventure and that I will not harm you."

" Mind you stick to your word, old boy," said Jack, as he took out the lid. Immediately a thick smoky mist poured out of the copper pot, and in a few seconds it had turned into the genie, all complete.

Talk of giants ! Why, that genie could have patted the tallest giant on the head, and it made our necks ache to look up at him. But we hadn't much time to take stock of the genie, for suddenly tossing us one on to each shoulder, he rose into the air, and we could feel the wind rushing by, as he swept along above the clouds. I don't know what Jack did, but I grabbed the nearest horn for dear life, and hoped for the best.

It did not seem more than a minute before the genie swooped down to earth again and landed us in a wood.

" This is the land of the Arabian Nights," he said. " I have taken you back eleven hundred years, and if you don't find any adventures it will be your own fault. Farewell ! " And he vanished through the earth.

Jack and I were rather taken aback by his abrupt departure, but when we looked at one another we nearly had a fit. We were dressed in Eastern clothes, turbans and all.

" Oh, I say, Geoff," spluttered Jack, " you should see yourself in a turban. You look like Jemima when she has been washing her hair."

" What about yourself ? " I retorted. " Wouldn't the fellows at school yell if they could see you now ? "

" Well, never mind," replied Jack. " It's the custom of the country. Let's see if this path leads to that gold dome shining through the trees."

It did ; in fact, it led us right to the gates of a huge palace built of pink marble, with rainbow-coloured windows, with the gold dome rising high in the centre. Crowds of people were passing in and out of the gates, so we just walked in, too, and presently came to the foot of the steps leading into the palace.

They really were fine steps, each one a block of solid glass, with a queer-looking beast made of glass with ruby eyes sitting on guard at each end.

" I wonder what the creatures are supposed to be ? " said Jack. " We haven't such things in the Zoo at home."

I had opened my mouth to answer when a trumpet rang out, and there on the topmost step stood the most gorgeous individual I'd ever seen out of a pantomime.

" In the name of the Sultan ! " he cried, and all the folk stood still.

" We can understand what he's saying," said Jack, in my ear.

" Of course," I muttered. " A knowledge of the language goes with the clothes. Be quiet and listen to the man."

The trumpeter blew another blast with great satisfaction at his own importance and announced :—

" The Sultan begs all those who will take part in the search for his son to enter his presence

immediately." Then came another flourish on the trumpet.

"Come on, Jack," I said. "Here is the very thing we are looking for."

"I'm with you," he said, and we ran up the glass steps.

"Alas!" cried a man in the crowd. "You are going to your deaths. Where are the young men who have gone before you?"

And the crowd answered, "Dead, dead, dead!"

"They sound cheerful, don't they?" laughed Jack, as we followed Scarlet and Gold into the Sultan's presence, and salaamed profoundly.

"Will your majesty deign to tell your humble servants the service you require of them?" I asked, in my best manner. I heard Jack snigger, but I promptly stood on his toe and brought him to his senses.

"Young men," replied the Sultan, raising his weary eyes, "a month ago my son Prince Kashimir went hunting in the wood beyond the palace. Since then no word has come, and I am distracted with grief."

We could see he was. Why, there was a silver table by him piled with the most beautiful cakes and fruit, and he hadn't touched one!

"If you restore my son, I will give you the half of my kingdom and my daughter in marriage," added the Sultan.

"Oh, thanks awfully," I said; "but we are doing it for sport, don't you know?"

"And you needn't bother about the daughter," broke in Jack, hurriedly. "Although we appreciate your offer."

"I don't quite understand you," said the Sultan, in a puzzled voice. "But I will bid my slaves attend to your wants ere you depart on your journey."

So he clapped his hands, and a dozen black slaves appeared. They ushered us into a small room hung with cloth of gold, and we took our seats on a pile of cushions. It was rather awkward to tuck our legs away in the correct fashion, but we managed it somehow. Then the slaves brought in refreshments on golden salvers, cakes and fruits and iced sherbet, and there wasn't much left when we had finished.

Leaving the palace, we headed for the wood, in which the genie had first dropped us.

"One road is as good as another," I observed. "Suppose we take every path to the right and see where it leads to?"

"Very well," replied Jack. "It's all the same to me."

After about an hour's tramp we came to a clearing in the wood. At one end stood a big white house surrounded by a high wall, and from the house came the sounds of music.

"I wonder who lives there?" said Jack. "Perhaps we can get some news about Prince Kashimir."

"Suppose you go and ask?" I suggested, "and I'll wait outside."

"All right," agreed my twin. "I won't be a minute."

But he was more than a minute, and when a quarter of an hour had gone by and no sign of him, I got a bit anxious. There was a tall tree growing against the wall, and in less than no time I was up among the branches. The first thing that struck me when I looked over the wall was the number of black dogs walking aimlessly about, or lying in corners with not a word to say for themselves. Raising my eyes I found that there was an open window just opposite the tree, and that I could easily see into the room. To my astonishment I saw Jack and a lady reclining on cushions at the table. The lady was very beautiful, although there was something about her expression I didn't like. Her dress was of silk, and round her neck she wore three strings of pearls as big as peas, with an emerald the size of a pigeon's egg hanging from the centre. Jack seemed to be having a good time, when suddenly the lady picked up a glass of water, exclaimed "Turn into a black dog!" and flung it into his face. Instantly the poor chap disappeared, and in his place stood a dog just like those in the courtyard. Then the wretch seized a whip and drove him out of the room to join the dogs outside. My blood was boiling, and it was all I could do to stay in the tree. As Jack came running down the steps, all the dogs in the courtyard gathered round him, lifted up their heads, and howled. I understood now that they were the fellows who had come in search of the Prince, and had met the same fate as he had at the hands of the Enchantress.

When the tumult had died down, I whistled. Jack saw me in the tree, and came close up to the wall. "Keep your heart up, old boy," I whispered. "I am determined to find some way of getting you out of this place. I am awfully cut up about it."

Jack nodded his head, and I slipped down the tree and wandered on through the wood, trying to think of some plan to break the enchantment.

Gradually the wood thinned, and presently I came out on to the highway. Farther along I saw a dervish sitting at the cross roads.

"Pity the poor, brother," he begged, holding out his hand. Luckily the genie had provided us with Eastern money, and I dropped a gold piece into his lap. "May your shadow never grow less," he ejaculated, in great joy. "But you look weary, brother. Have you travelled far to-day?"

He seemed such a good old soul that I sat down beside him and told him all about Jack.

"Alas!" said the dervish, "it is a woeful story. There is only one way to break the power of that Enchantress. Once let her leave the grounds of her house and her spells will come to naught."

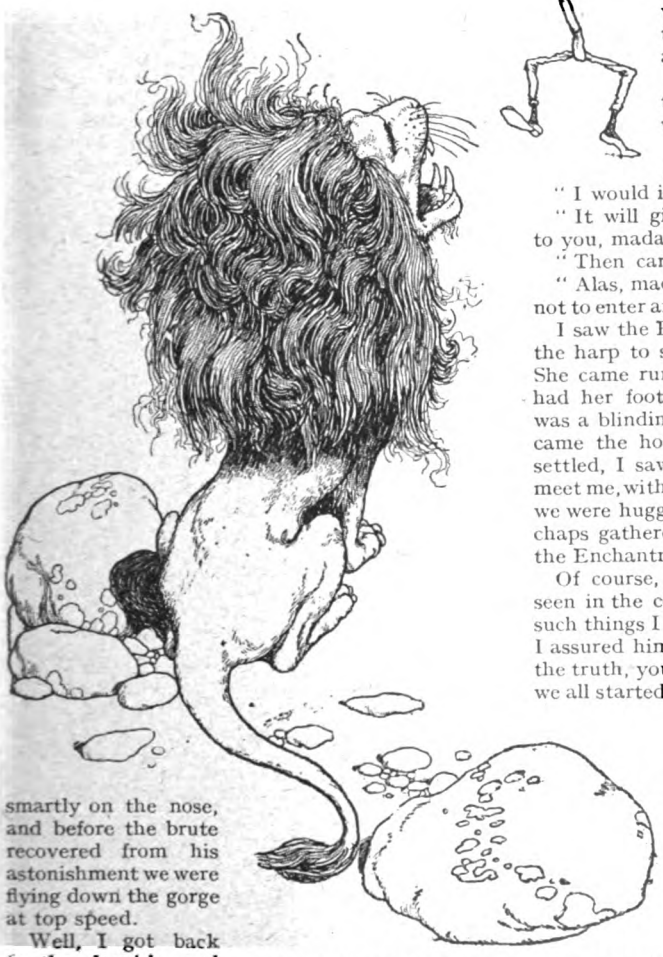
"How am I to get her to come out?" I asked, impatiently.

The dervish stroked his long beard and smiled. "That woman is very vain of her beautiful voice," he explained. "Now I know the whereabouts of a magic harp that can play any melody on earth. Such a harp would tempt her from the security of her house."

"Where is it?" I demanded, jumping up. The dervish stood his stick upright on the ground, mumbled a few words over it, and at once that stick was fitted with a pair of long, thin legs.

"Follow the stick wherever it goes," said the dervish, "and it will lead you to the resting-place of the magic harp."

So I thanked the old chap and hurried off in pursuit of the stick, which was covering the ground in fine style. After a time the road sloped down hill, until at last we were in a narrow gorge, with the rocks towering high on either side. It was almost dark by now, and I could hardly see where I was going, but the stick hopped along and I followed. At a bend in the path the stick halted, and when I came up I saw a great hole in the rock. In climbed the stick and of course so did I, although if it hadn't been for Jack I would have thought twice about it. I found myself in a small cave, and in the gloom I could just see a golden harp at the back of the cave. It didn't take me long to snatch the harp, and turning round I was making for the open air when a lion rose up out of a corner, and advanced on us with bristling mane. My heart leapt into my mouth, but the wily stick tapped the lion



smartly on the nose, and before the brute recovered from his astonishment we were flying down the gorge at top speed.

"IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO SNATCH THE HARP, AND I WAS MAKING FOR THE OPEN AIR WHEN A LION ROSE UP OUT OF A CORNER."

Well, I got back to the dervish, and he told me to beware of the Enchantress's grounds, although I didn't need the warning, you may be sure. Then I said good-bye, shouldered the harp, and soon reached the place of spells. The night had fallen and the house was so brightly illuminated that the light streamed out over the road. I took my stand full in the light and started to sing. I felt a silly ass and no mistake, but the harp chimed in and bucked me up wonderfully. I had hardly begun the second song when the witch appeared at the door.

"Fair youth," she cooed, in silvery tones, "whence cometh that marvellous music?"

"Madam," I replied, "from my magic harp."

"I would it were mine," she said, longingly.

"It will give me great pleasure to present it to you, madam," I protested, bowing low.

"Then carry it into my house," she invited.

"Alas, madam," I sighed. "I am under a vow not to enter any habitation for the space of a year."

I saw the Enchantress wavering, and I ordered the harp to strike up again. That decided her. She came running across the road, but scarcely had her foot crossed the threshold than there was a blinding flash, a deafening roar, and down came the house in ruins. When the dust had settled, I saw a crowd of young men coming to meet me, with Jack leading the way. In two shakes we were hugging one another like mad, while the chaps gathered round us and cheered. Near by, the Enchantress lay dead, clutching the harp.

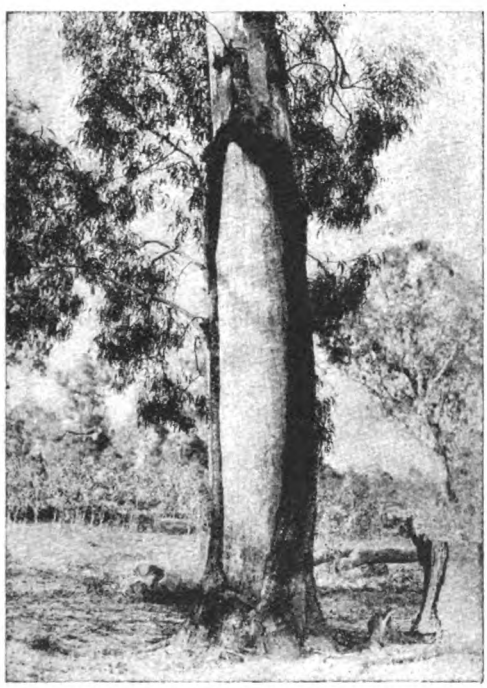
Of course, the chaps were the black dogs I'd seen in the courtyard, and Prince Kashimir said such things I couldn't dream of writing down. So I assured him it had been a pleasure (not exactly the truth, you know, but one must be polite), and we all started to walk back to the Sultan's palace.

Now, as we were walking through the wood, suddenly the genie appeared, snatched us away from the startled eyes of our companions, and whirled us off into space. Then he dropped down to earth again, landed us on the very strip of seashore on which we had found the copper pot, and vanished.

It was early morning, and the tide was going out. As we looked out to sea, we saw the waves tossing a glittering object which reflected the sun's rays. It was the genie's copper pot!

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

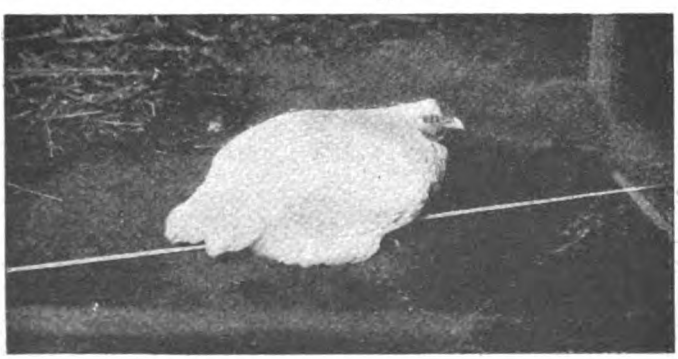


HOW A BARK CANOE IS MADE.

HOW the Australian aborigines obtain their canoes practically ready-made is clearly shown in the above striking photograph. It will be observed that they have removed from one of the mammoth trees a huge section of bark, which, coming away in one piece, is so shaped that only a very little is required to make it into quite a serviceable canoe.—Mr. M. Millington, c/o Kodak, Ltd., Argent Street, Broken Hill, Australia.

FOWLS FASCINATED BY A WHITE LINE.

THE accompanying photograph shows a trick I have sometimes seen played on fowls. The smooth brick floor of the great barn was brushed free of bits, a white line drawn across it, and a rooster, having with some trouble been captured, was placed on the line so that he was sitting along it with his bill just touching. His captor gently let go of him, when I expected to see him run away, but, to my astonishment, having raised his head perhaps an inch from the line, he remained without moving exactly as placed for between five and ten minutes, when he suddenly walked away, looking a trifle dazed and very foolish. I thought this behaviour must be due to some peculiarity of the cock, so repeated the experiment with a white hen. The effect was the same: she remained apparently hypnotized by the line for rather longer than the cock, then got up, shook herself, and went off. I have no explanation to offer, and can only vouch for what I saw—namely, that the white line appeared to mesmerize the fowls and render them incapable of moving for about ten minutes.—Miss Frances Pitt, The Albynes, Bridgnorth.



A CYLINDER SLEDGE.

PROPELLED by cylinders furnished with spiral flanges, a sledge has been invented by Fred. Burch, of Michigan, which is unlike any other vehicle in existence. The sledge is propelled by a gas-engine, which drives the cylinders in a rotating motion at right angles to the road, and the flanges engage in the snow or ice of the surface and send the machine forward at a slow rate of speed. Power, not speed, is the aim desired, and as this vehicle will traverse frozen lakes or snow-covered fields which would be impassable for ordinary motor-vehicles, the sledge is available for hauling logs in the Michigan forests. Its tractive power is shown by the load of a dozen passengers hauled by this strange device. It will be observed that it is steered by a single runner in front, turned by the steering-wheel of the automobile body that forms the upper part of the sledge.—Mr. C. L. Edholm, 68, West Ninety-seventh Street, New York City, U.S.A.

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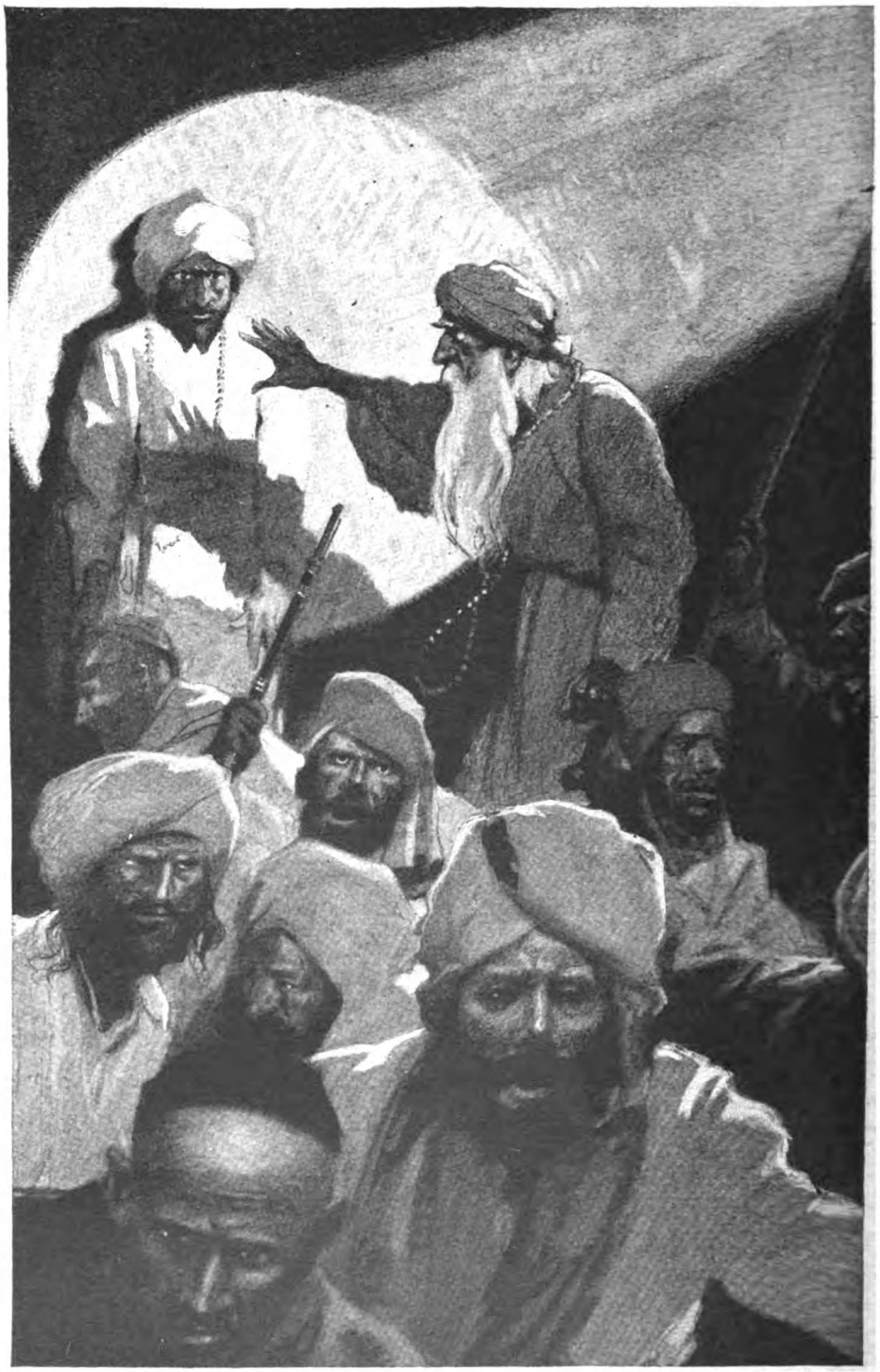

"HE STOOD FIXED, INCAPABLE OF MOVEMENT, LIKE A MAN THAT HAS DREAMED AND CANNOT YET DISTINGUISH DREAM FROM REALITY."

(*See page* 106.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 54. AUGUST, 1917. No. 320.

The Magic of Muhammed Din.

By F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

Illustrated by W. Reynolds and G. H. Evison.

THE intense heat of the day was already a memory of uneasy sleep, and the distant hills seen across the plain of grey, sun-baked mud were soft in a soft sky. Right across the horizon, as seen from the Political Officer's bungalow, stretched the mountain range, rising from deep blue at the base through a gradation of fairy amethyst and turquoise to a delicate pink suffusing the summits. The Political Officer, his left elbow resting on his writing-table, his fingers caressing the bowl of the old briar whose stem was gripped between white teeth, tobacco-smoke wreathing away from him, contemplated it with bent brows and narrowed eyes. The gaze of that lean face, sallow with many Indian summers, roved not over the distant prospect, tempting though were the transitions and flaws of changing colour on crag and peak to left and right of the point on which his vision was fixed. His expression was stern, the thrust-forward of his clean-cut jaw predominant. Æsthetic enjoyment of the aspect of the frontier hills thus perfidiously beautiful in the evening light had no part in his meditations.

The curtain of the door was plucked aside. A long-robed native, white-bearded, entered noiselessly, bowed, with arms outstretched from his sides, stood erect and waited for orders.

The Political Officer responded with a nod to the "*Salaam, Sahib.*" His gaze detached itself from the distant view, ranged keenly over the tall figure in front of him. Under the swathes of the green *pagari* that narrowed the brown forehead a pair of dark eyes of strange intensity met his own. The disturbing effect of their direct gaze was heightened by the bushy white brows under which they glowed. The big, beaked nose, thin-bridged, emphasized their power. The long, white beard spreading over the breast solemnified them with a hint of ancient wisdom. The eyes of the white sahib and the ascetic *Haj* (as his green turban proclaimed him) met unflinchingly.

"The *Sahib* asked for the fakir Muhammed Din—is it well, *Sahib?*"

"It is well, *Haj*," replied the Political Officer, a twinkle in his eye and a subtle emphasis on the title.

"Did not the Prophet throw his green mantle over Ali that he might himself escape from his enemies, O Protector of the Religion?" replied the fakir, a little piqued.

"*Maloom*" ("it is known"), said the Political Officer, curtly but with a tone of

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friendliness. "I called you not to discuss the religion, but to protect it. I have work for you, Muhammed Din—dangerous work."

"It is well, *Sahib*."

"An emissary of our foes is among the tribes, Muhammed Din, and is preaching a false gospel to them. War and the woes of war will surely follow if we do not still his tongue. Listen! You have heard that the infidel Caliph Willem of the West has falsely proclaimed himself a follower of the Prophet that he may use the power of true believers to further his own wicked ends?"

"It is known, *Sahib*."

"He has sent one of his tribe, dressed as a fakir, into the hills to preach a new Jehad. Already the *mullahs* (priests) are gathering about him. This fakir calls himself Abd-ul-Islam, but he is a Feringhi, no true believer, and no true friend to the religion. Yet he is leading many astray, for he deludes them with a false magic. You will see for yourself. You remember the magic pictures you saw at Karachi?"

"I remember, *Sahib*."

"It is such magic as that. There is none but Muhammed Din I might safely trust to close the mouth of such a rogue; therefore, Muhammed Din"—the eyes of white *sahib* and Moslem fakir again looked into each other—"I am sending you on the mission. I asked you to come as a fakir because I judged that to be your best disguise. You have come as a *Haj*, which is even better. I do not want this impostor killed, if it can be helped. I want him exposed, discredited. I send you, Muhammed Din." He looked at him with significance as he added: "You may find an old acquaintance."

The fakir stroked his long beard.

"He shall be brought to you riding backwards upon an ass, and the women shall mock at him, *Sahib*. I swear it."

The Political Officer smiled.

"None can if you cannot, Muhammed Din. Now I will explain these things to you more fully."

The Political Officer spread a map across the table and pointed out the route of the German agent across the Persian frontier and among the hills. His present abiding-place was fairly accurately known. The pseudo-fakir attentively considered the ways to it. Then he drew himself erect.

"It is well, *Sahib*. I will now go."

"You have a plan, Muhammed?"

The fakir smiled grimly.

"This dog has his false magic, *Sahib*, but Muhammed Din knows many magics that are not false. I have sworn."

"Go, then. Allah be with you!"

"And with you, *Sahib!*"

Muhammed Din salaamed once more, lifted the curtain, and passed out. The Political Officer watched him go across the compound, and then bent down to his work again with a little outbreathing of satisfaction. The Secret Service had no more reliable man than Muhammed Din.

The squalid little village high up in a cleft of the brown and barren hills, that gleamed golden aloft where they cut sharply across the intense blue of the sky, was filled with an uncommon concourse of tribesmen. And yet more were arriving. Down the stony paths which led to the village from the heights, up the boulder-strewn, dried-up stream-bed which afforded the easiest passage from below, the hillmen hurried in little groups—a bearded *khan*, a modern rifle on his shoulder, his cummerbund stuck full of knives, followed by a ragged rabble of retainers, variously armed. Their weapons were mementoes of generations of rifle-stealing and gun-running. Lee-Enfields, Lee-Metfords, Martinis, Sniders—all were represented. Not a few carried the old-fashioned *jezail*, the long-barrelled gun with inlaid, curved stock. All had knives.

They swarmed on the rough roadway between the squat stone, windowless houses whose loopholes were eloquent of their owners' outlook on life. They clustered round the stone-parapeted well in the centre of the village, so that the women with the water-pots were richly provided with an excuse for loitering. The clamour of excited voices resounding from the walls was re-echoed at a fiercer shout from the steep, towering hill-sides, stone-terraced near the village into plots of cultivated land.

This was no ordinary assemblage. From far and near the tribesmen swarmed in, and men met face to face whose habitual encounter would have sent both dodging to cover, rifle to the shoulder. The blood-feuds were laid aside. Families that for months had lived in terror of their neighbours across the village street, quitting their domiciles stealthily by the back way when they had occasion to go out, while the sudden rifle-shot of the concealed marksman added steadily to the tale of vendetta victims on both sides, mingled now with the throng, albeit cautiously. Men whose dwellings were a doorless tower which they entered and left by a basket on a rope, who tilled their fields with ever a rifle in their

hand, strode now down the street, their dark eyes roving from side to side, and passed their adversaries with scarce a scowl. Mullahs, Koran in hand, their young disciples at their skirts, threaded their way through the crowd, giving and receiving pious salutation, exhorting, preaching, inflaming the fanaticism of passions naturally fierce. The blood-feuds between man and man, village and village, were forgotten in the reawakened, never-extinguished feud between Islam and the infidel. Behind the priests marched men armed to the teeth, their faces working in a frenzy, their eyes inflamed. They were *ghazi* —wrought up to the pitch of fervour where their own life is a predetermined sacrifice, so that they may first slay an unbeliever, sure of immediate Paradise as their reward.

Above the murmur of voices came the continual drone :—

"*La Allah il Allah!* There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet!"

It re-echoed down the valley in sudden shouts.

Into this excited throng strode the green turban, the venerable figure of Muhammed Din, piously telling his beads. Men jostled one another out of his way, for this fakir was quite obviously an especially holy man, one who had made the pilgrimage. Giving and receiving the Moslem greeting, "May the peace of Allah be with you!" he inquired the house of the village mullah, and made his way towards it.

He met the priest just on the point of quitting his dwelling. The mullah had a busy and important look. It was a great day for him.

"The peace of Allah be with you!" said Muhammed Din.

"And with you, O holy man!" replied the mullah. He scented an application for hospitality. "Blessed is the day that you come to us, for Allah worketh wonders in my village. Many have come to witness them. Alas! that you did not come before, O holy one, or my house that I have already given up to others would be yours!"

"A corner and a crust of bread, O Mullah!"

"Alas! Allah be my witness! Neither remains to me, O holy one—but I will lodge you with a pious man when the saint whom Allah has sent to us has finished the wonders he is about to show. I must hurry, O holy one! for the moment is at hand. The peace of Allah be with you!"

"Allah has guided my footsteps to you, O Mullah, for I have come from a far land to see these wonders. I will accompany you, for it is His will."

"Hurry, then!" said the priest, irritably, "or Shere Khan's house will be full. Allah knoweth that I praise Him for thy coming!" he added by way of afterthought.

The house of Shere Khan, the headman of the village, was besieged by a turbulent crowd of tribesmen, who jostled one another for entrance. In view of the limited space within, only those known to be most influential were admitted. They deposited their weapons as they entered.

Muhammed Din followed the mullah, who bustled in with an air of great importance. The largest room of Shere Khan's house, a gloomy, stone-walled apartment, almost completely dark since the loopholes high up were stuffed with rags, was set aside for the occasion. More than two-thirds of it was already filled with tribesmen, who squatted on the floor. The remaining portion was rigidly kept clear by one or two of Shere Khan's armed retainers. "Sit farther back, O Yakub Khan! More space, O Protector of the Poor! Farther back, O Yusuf, lest the miracles about to be performed by the will of Allah scorch thee! Back, back, O children of the Prophet! I entreat ye!" The entreaty was emphasized by sundry kicks which the sentries grinningly delivered with a sense of the privileges proper to such an occasion.

The wall at the end of the clear space was whitened. High up on the other wall, behind the tribesmen, was a newly-erected box of wood, large enough to hold a man, supported on pillars of light timber, and only to be reached by a ladder, of which there was at the moment no sign. The tribesmen turned their heads curiously towards this unusual contrivance and nudged and whispered to one another.

"Behold the cage in which the saint keeps the devils over which Allah and the Prophet have given him power!"

Those who were nearest it stirred uneasily.

"What if it should be the will of Allah that they break out of the cage!"

"We are God's and unto God shall we return!" replied his neighbour, nervously, quoing the verse of the Koran which gives protection in time of danger. "May Allah protect us!"

Muhammed Din sat modestly among the throng, telling his beads with bent head.

"What thinkest thou of these wonders, O holy one from a far land?" asked the man next him.

"The wisdom of Allah is inscrutable and much that is hidden shall be yet revealed," replied Muhammed Din, solemnly.

There was a stir of expectation throughout the gloomy apartment. The mullah entered by a door at the farther end, near the whitened wall, uttered a sonorous benediction, and sat down, with grave self-satisfaction, in the front row.

One minute more of tense waiting—and then, amid a low murmur from the assembly, the curtain at the far door was again lifted. The "Saint" appeared. For a moment he stood in a dramatic pose, illumined by a ray of light from without as he held back the curtain. Then, dropping it, he strode solemnly forward into the cleared space. Every eye gazed at him with an avid curiosity. The light in the doorway had revealed him as a youngish man, despite the full beard which lent him dignity. His stately carriage of the long Moslem robes, dimly perceived in the gloom, was worthy of his *rôle*.

He stretched out his hands.

"The peace of Allah be with you!" he said in a deep tone that had only the faintest tinge of a European accent.

In a low deep chant of awed voices the assembly returned the salutation.

"O children of the Prophet! Men of the hills! Greeting! Greeting not from me but from the greatest Sultan of the world!" He spoke in their own dialect, but with a strong admixture of Persian words. "Listen! Ye know already—for his fame has passed the confines of the earth—that the great Sultan Willem of the Franks was visited by a vision from God, and that having had truth revealed unto him he turned aside from the error of his ways and embraced the true faith. Written in great letters of gold over the Sultan's palace shall ye find the sacred words: "There is no God but God and Mohammed is His Prophet!"

He stopped to allow his words their full effect. A murmur of wonderment came from his audience. "A-ah! God is great! Unto Him be the praise!"

He resumed.

"And with him turned all his vizirs and mullahs and khans from the false belief and called on Allah and Mohammed. I—even I, Abd-ul-Islam, who stand before you—am one of them. The Sultan Willem issued a decree to all his people that they should believe in the true faith—and lo! Allah wrought a miracle and they all believed, destroying their false mosques and building new ones to the glory of the Prophet. Great is Allah and Mohammed His Prophet that these things should have come to pass, O children of the Faith! They are hard of belief, for the Franks ye well know are a stiff-necked race. Yet such it is, and my Lord the Sultan hath sent me on an embassy to you that I may tell you these marvellous things. And that ye may more readily believe, Allah in His great mercy has given me power to show you these wonders with your own eyes." His tone took on a deeper, more sonorous solemnity. "O Allah! Allah! In the name of the Prophet, vouchsafe that these thy children may see the great Sultan Willem as he is at this moment!"

He clapped his hands sharply together.

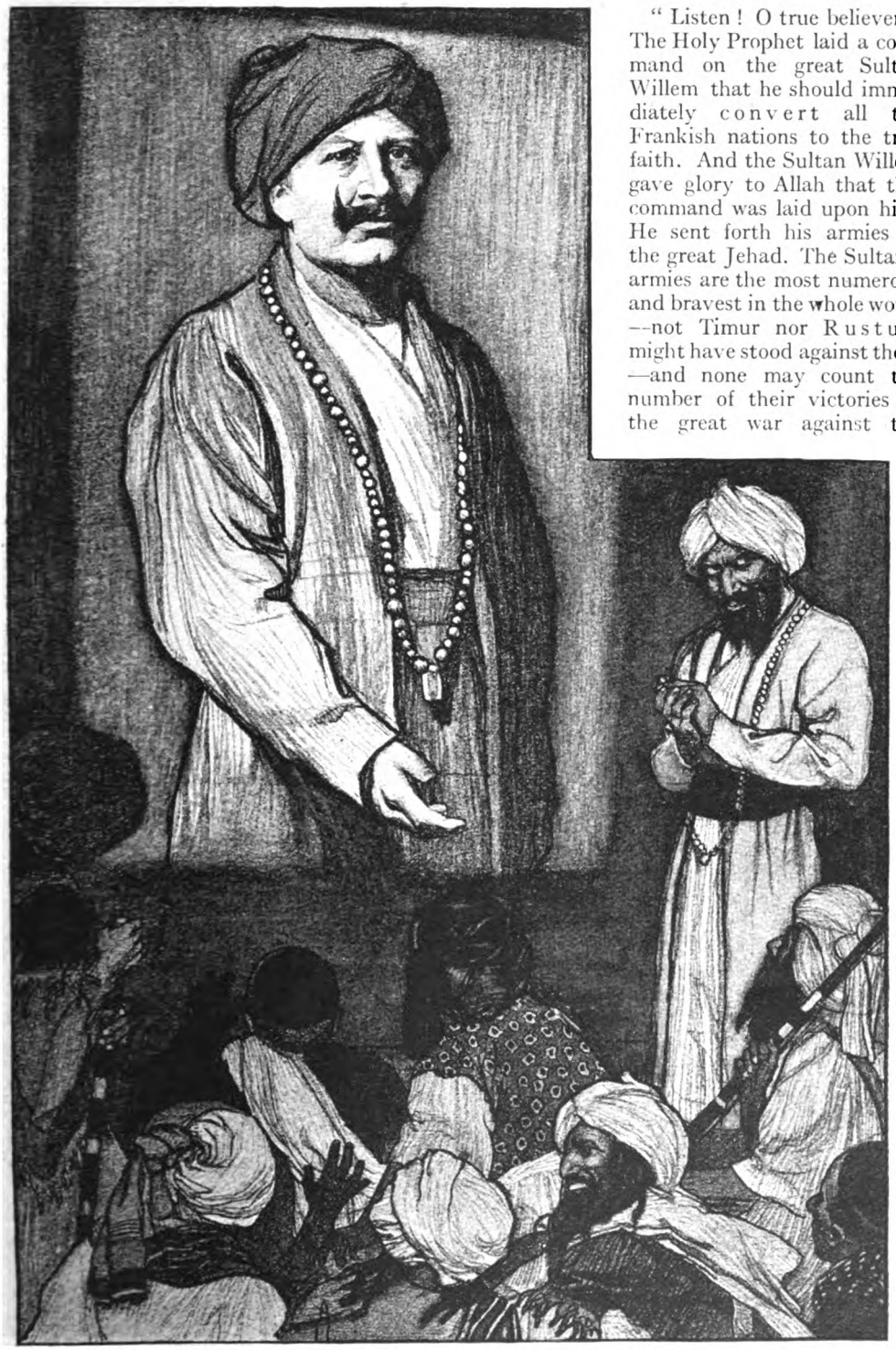
Instantly a beam of intensely white light shot across the dark apartment from the "cage" and fell upon the white wall at the other end. The "Saint" stepped quickly out of the radiance. On the white surface there suddenly appeared a life-size portrait of His Imperial Majesty Kaiser Wilhelm II. —*gowned in long robes and coiffed with a turban*. A gasp of astonishment broke from the peering spectators in the dark room. Once more the "Saint" clapped his hands. The Imperial figure walked in stately fashion straight towards the audience—seeming that in another moment it would be walking out in the air over its heads—stopped, stretched out its right hand, smiled. The muscles of its face moved, the mouth opened—in a speech that none heard. "*Aie! Aie!*" broke from the spellbound tribesmen.

"Alas! that he is so far away that ye cannot hear his words!" lamented the "Saint." "But I can hear them. He tells you to believe in me, who am his messenger, by the grace of Allah and the Prophet. O Allah, vouchsafe that these Thy followers may witness with their own eyes the conversion of the vizirs to the true faith!" Again a clap of the hands, and the picture on the wall changed.

The tribesmen gazed at what to a Western eye would have been an obviously cardboard imitation of an Oriental room with a dais on one side of it. On that dais stood the figure in Moslem robes. Filling the remainder of the room was a throng of men in German uniforms, *pickelhäube* on their heads. They advanced one by one to the figure on the dais, knelt, offered up their spiked helmets, and received in exchange a turban from their graciously-smiling lord.

"See, O people, and believe!" cried the "Saint."

"*Aie! Aie!*" came the response. "We see and we believe! God is great! There is none great but God, and unto Him be all the praise!"



"Listen! O true believers! The Holy Prophet laid a command on the great Sultan Willem that he should immediately convert all the Frankish nations to the true faith. And the Sultan Willem gave glory to Allah that this command was laid upon him. He sent forth his armies in the great Jehad. The Sultan's armies are the most numerous and bravest in the whole world—not Timur nor Rustum might have stood against them—and none may count the number of their victories in the great war against the

"THE IMPERIAL FIGURE WALKED IN STATELY FASHION STRAIGHT TOWARDS THE AUDIENCE—SEEMING THAT IN ANOTHER MOMENT IT WOULD BE WALKING OUT IN THE AIR OVER ITS HEADS."

infidel Franks. Their triumphs are as the rocks on the hill-sides, beyond reckoning and eternal. All the nations of the Franks fled before them, and were slain like dogs as they ran. And most of all fled before them and were slain the insolent English dogs that, thinking themselves far away from the power of the Sultan Willem, are puffed up with a vain pride and tread upon the neck of the true believer in the land beyond the Indus—nay, who invade your hills and lay waste your crops, seeking to destroy the one true faith. Is it not so?"

"Allah knoweth! He spēaketh through thy lips, O holy One!" was the chorused reply from the darkened room. There could be no denial of any statement from a source of such sanctity.

"Look then upon the battle and the destruction of the English dogs!" cried Abd-ul-Islam, giving the signal once more.

Immediately another picture appeared upon the wall—a picture of pseudo-British troops, uniformed so as to be familiar to the tribesmen, taking up a position for battle.

"Watch! O children of the Prophet!" cried the wonder-worker. "Behold the djinns which the Sultan Willem has under his command—for to him has the Prophet given the power of Solomon—behold the djinns that go before the Sultan's army destroying the English infidels!"

Great founts of black smoke leaped up among the soldiers on the wall—debris was flung high into the air—bodies lay upon the ground, visible where the smoke cleared. The soldiers fired quickly from behind cover, dodged, flung up their arms, and fell smitten by an invisible foe. The picture, though a "fake," was cleverly done and would have deceived more sophisticated spectators. The tribesmen did not suppress their exclamations of awe and wonder.

"Behold!" cried the showman. "The soldiers of the Sultan advance!" A serried line of German infantry swept across the picture, bayonets levelled, and the survivors of the defending troops fled before them. The line changed direction and marched straight towards the spectators, an irresistibly advancing menace, swelling larger and larger, uncannily silent.

Shrill cries of alarm broke out from the darkened room. "*Aie! Aie!* Allah protect us! We are God's and unto God shall we return!"

The line of infantry swelled to a superhuman immensity, seemed on the point of reaching the spectators—and then there was darkness.

From the gloom came the voice of the German emissary.

"You have beheld, O children of the true Faith, the infidel English ran like dogs!"

"Like dogs they ran! With our own eyes we have seen it, praise be to Allah! Death to the infidel!"

"Now see the soldiers of the Prophet, the victorious army of the Sultan, destroying the Christian mosques in the conquered country!" announced the showman, in a voice of triumph.

On the wall was thrown the picture of a Belgian village church. German soldiers were busy about it. Then volumes of smoke began to issue from the windows, tongues of flame. The roof fell in. The church was reduced to a ruin.

"Behold! Ye see with your own eyes!"

"We see, we see! God is great! Unto Him be the praise!" came the reply from the spectators.

"Now see others!" cried the German. "This is the work of the Sultan's armies—will ye now doubt that he has set his face against the Christian infidels?"

Picture after picture of ruined and desolated churches followed upon the wall. The German authorities had evidently prepared a special film of them. Cries of wild approbation broke from the fanatical tribesmen, the mullahs loudest.

"Once more, O people, look upon the English prisoners, whose lives have been spared because they have embraced the true faith, being led through the Sultan's capital!"

A film of a few British prisoners from Gallipoli being marched through the streets of Constantinople was then shown, amid shouts of applause.

The picture was taken off, but the beam of light still blazed across the room. The German placed himself full in it.

"Ye have seen with your own eyes, O warriors of the hills! Praise be to Allah for His mercies! Ye will no longer doubt. In the name of the Prophet, the Sultan Willem, the protector of Islam, commands that ye rise up and sweep beyond the Indus. Everywhere the power of the English is broken. With your own eyes ye have seen it. Only on your borders do they still keep up a vain show. Rise up, O children of the Prophet, and sweep these dogs of infidels into the sea! The rich lands of India and much loot will be the reward of your valour. Paradise awaits those who fall in the sacred fight! The green banner of Islam shall wave over the entire earth, for there is no God but God,

Mohammed is His Prophet, and the Sultan Willem is His chosen instrument!"

Karl Schultz felt an inward glow of triumph at his own histrionic power as, his words ringing sonorously through the stone apartment, he stood in the full blaze of light and raised his arm. It evoked loud shouts of fanatic frenzy from the excited assembly. They clamoured to be led against the infidel there and now. He kept his arm outstretched as though to still the tumult, as though his discourse were yet unfinished.

But the cries would not cease. "Great is Allah! Death to the infidel! Death! Allah! Allah! There is no God but God! Allah! Allah! Allah! Death to the infidel—death!"

Suddenly there was a new element in the vociferation, a movement among the assembly far back in the dark room. "Make way for the holy man with great tidings from India! Make way for the *Haj!* In the name of the Prophet—make way, dogs that ye are!"

Schultz looked towards the venerable figure of Muhammed Din pressing through the throng. A sudden doubt leaped up in him, was extinguished in self-confidence. The strange fakir approached. The wild clamour of the tribesmen was stilled in curiosity. They fell back in a sudden awe.

Schultz watched the venerable stranger advance solemnly, silently, into the blaze of light in which he himself stood. Again he was conscious of an instinctive tremor. "The peace of Allah be with thee, O *Haj!*" he said, and he found that he had deliberately to control his own voice. There was something uncannily impressive in the advance of this silent, dignified old man.

"And with all the faithful!" came the sonorous reply, enigmatic to the German's ears.

He found himself looking into a pair of strangely disturbing eyes; heard, with a wild reeling shock of the spirit, his own tongue spoken in a low, level Oriental voice.

"Move not a finger and make not a sound, Schultz Sahib, or you are a dead man!" Schultz Sahib's eyes glimpsed the muzzle of a pistol not six inches from his chest. "*Smile, Sahib!* or your friends may interrupt us."

Having once ceded to the menace of the pistol, the German's brain could not resist the command of the imperative eyes that seemed to be boring deep into him. He *smiled*—a deathly smile.

"You have forgotten me, Schultz Sahib? It is not so long since we worked together on the railway. One of us at least learned a great deal about the other in those days, *Sahib. Smile!*—keep smiling!"

A wild revolt surged up in the German, subsided, without exterior evidence, under the glare of the dominating eyes which held his fascinated. He tried to turn away his gaze, was checked by the level, purposeful voice of the fakir.

"Keep your eyes on mine, *Sahib!* Look elsewhere and you are dead before you have looked!"

He heard the words reverberating through him, endlessly re-echoing in chambers of his soul magically open to them. He felt himself fixed, immobile, in a strange paralysis of the faculties. The terrible eyes looked into his that he could not close—he felt, as it were, waves of immeasurable strange force flowing from them, rolling over him, submerging him. And yet still he looked into the eyes of the fakir, his own eyes an open port to their influence.

A subtle, pervading odour ascended his nostrils, filled his lungs, mounted to his head. His brain grew dizzy with it. And still the compelling eyes held him, prevented him from turning his own eyes to the source of the odour. He lost the sense of his environment, was oblivious to the awed tribesmen staring silently at the pair in the blaze of light. He saw nothing but the eyes—lost consciousness of his own body. He stared—and lost consciousness even of the eyes at which he stared.

There was vacuity, oblivion, an annihilation of time—and then out of that vacuity a voice commenced to speak. He heard it with a shock of the nerves—it crashed through darkness with a mighty power. He seemed suspended like a lost spirit in everlasting night, fumbling around the vague yet massive foundations of the world—indefinitely remote from all that he had ever known. He could not detach himself from those foundations. They quivered under the booming voice, communicated an unpleasant thrill to the core of him. An awful unimaginable disaster seemed to envelop him. The tiny germ of consciousness that was still his fought for extension, strove to see. All was blackness—blackness. And still the voice went on relentlessly, driving through darkness, like a ploughshare thrust forward by the firm grip of a mighty and inexorable hand. Immeasurable results seemed dependent on its progress. He listened to it—and as he focused himself on the listening, a dim perception of his environment came to him. He was vaguely conscious of a sea of faces, upturned, listening—as he himself listened. Those faces—they

were in some relation to him, there was a link between them and him—he could not determine it. He listened. The words rang like sounding brass, the vowels roaringly sonorous, the consonants clashing. He concentrated himself on their meaning—penetrated to it suddenly as through veils smitten asunder.

"*Lies and again lies, O children of the Prophet! A mockery of lies! The Sultan Willem is a servant of Shaitan who feigneth religion that he may lure true believers to their damnation while they unwittingly serve the Evil One!*" His perception leaped up, clawing at danger, and then was dragged down again, engulfed. He felt himself like a man drowning in black waters at night—down—down—and then, fighting obscurely, he shot up again, heard the inexorable voice continuing: "*This magic you have looked upon is a false magic—the magic of unbelievers in league with Eblis!*" He heard the re-echoing denunciation in a spasm of full consciousness—was suddenly cognizant of the sea of faces, of fierce passions exhaling from it—was completely aware of the menace of utter ruin. A great revulsion surged in him. This must be stopped—stopped! The necessity for instant protest was an anguish in him. All of himself that he could summon from the darkness as his own shrieked the negative, and yet he did not utter a sound—knew that he did not. "*Climb up into that box some of you, and ye shall find no magic but a Frank there!*" He strained with all his soul towards the faculty of speech—felt his powers vanquishing the spell of dumbness—on the verge of utterance shaped his words of denial. "*Lo! have I not spoken the truth? Yea, I cannot speak other than the truth, for I am the runaway servant of Muhammed Din, and his sanctity hath broken the compact between me and the Evil One!*" In staggering horror he realized—*the voice was his own!*

He stood fixed, incapable of movement, and saw—like a man that has dreamed and cannot yet distinguish dream from reality—the mob of tribesmen surging obscurely in the long stone room, saw the blinding white eye of the lantern still shining steadfastly upon him—saw it waver, swing from side to side, and then, with one last blinding flash, disappear. In the utter darkness he heard shouts and shrieks and fierce derisive laughter. He heard crash upon crash as heavy objects were flung from a height at the other end of the room. He heard a piercing yell, an agonized, appealing utterance of his own name. For a brief second it shocked him into complete consciousness—*his operator!* Then, ere he could break his invisible bonds, he felt a pair of cool hands pressed tightly against his brow, over his eyes, and he relapsed totally—with a last little gasp—into nothingness.

He awoke again to see the tribesmen surging round him, fiercely shouting. The room re-echoed with reiterated cries of "*Sharm! Sharm!*" * and a howl that was so

"HE SAW MUHAMMED DIN STANDING BEFORE HIM, FENDING OFF HIS ADVERSARIES."

* Sharm, a stain of dishonour that can only be obliterated in blood. The conception that underlies the blood-feud.

unmistakably for blood that it chilled him to the heart. The room was lighter now — the rags had been pulled down from the high loopholes in the wall. He saw Muhammed Din standing before him, fending off his adversaries. He was still incapable of voluntary movement. A great faintness swept over him. He reeled back; found himself supported by the angle of the wall. He had been thrust back there all unconscious of the movement.

Dazed and sick, he heard Muhammed Din speaking.

"O children of the Hills, Allah and His holy Prophet sent me to you to rescue you from the snare of the Evil One. On me is laid the charge of vengeance upon this wretch, who was my slave ere he became the possessed of Shaitan. But this much of vengeance will I grant ye, for this much is just. He made a mock of you. Make ye a mock of him. Let him be driven out of the village, face tailwards upon an ass. The women and children shall cry derision upon the runaway servant who came to deceive you as a saint with the false magic of Shaitan!"

Staring speechlessly before him, the exposed charlatan heard the howls of approval of the mob. His faintly-working intellect wondered how the mullah was taking this deception— perhaps even yet—— He saw Muhammed Din hold up a large bag of money. He recognized it with a last hopelessness.

"This gold"— Muhammed Din emptied some of it upon his hand — "this gold hath my servant surely received from Shaitan. It is accursed unless some holy man receive it. Therefore to you, O Mullah, do I give it."

The mullah snatched at it.

"Great is Allah and for the meanest of His creatures doth He provide!" he said. "Thou speakest truth, O holy fakir. Praise be to Allah that I am here to protect the faithful from the accursed magic of this gold. As to this wretch, accursed of Allah, let him be driven quickly forth as thou sayest, O holy one! It is meet that thy vengeance should not have to linger."

There was a rush at the fallen magician. He swooned into their arms.

Some little time later, when the last stone had been flung and the last epithet of mocking insult had ceased to echo from the hills, Schultz Sahib, his hands bound behind his back, his feet tied under the belly of his mount, raised his eyes from the ass's tail that he had been contemplating.

"Thou hast won, O Muhammed Din—but even yet I do not understand. What happened?"

The fakir smiled.

"Thou hast thy magics, Schultz Sahib— what thinkest thou of the magic of Muhammed Din? Hurry, O Willem, hurry!" he cried, as his stick descended with a resounding thwack upon the hindquarters of the ass. "Thou art laggard in thy invasion of the territories of the English!"

The Political Officer listened to the story, and, embracing hypnotism in the studies of his exile, made a note of it.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF LADY FORBES-ROBERTSON.

AGE 9.

LADY FORBES-ROBERTSON'S MOTHER AS A CHILD.

AGE 17.
Photo. by Crockett.

HOW did I begin my stage-work, I have often been asked. Well, I did not, as do many actresses, have a desire from earliest childhood to enter the theatrical profession. I went on the stage because I wanted to be near my sister Maxine.

My first night on the stage was a keen joy and excitement to me. I felt no nervousness, and for quite a little time afterwards found that the excitement of opening with a new play banished fear from me. Oddly enough, I was attacked with nervousness on second nights, that was later, when I nad had time to realize my responsibilities.

The play I made my first appearance in was "A Woman of No Importance." I played Lady Stutfield and my sister Mrs. Allenby. We were in Rose Coghlan's repertory company, and the next night had to act in "Diplomacy," in which I was Mion, the little French maid. This was in the early autumn of 1894.

I have said I was not nervous on first nights, but I forgot. I was this time, for I found it difficult to walk across the stage—as I had to do before speaking my opening lines—and was unaccustomed to wearing a train and low-cut bodice. I had never worn evening-dress before.

Looking back, I recall one or two amusing contretemps which marked my venture into drama. In "Diplomacy" Baron Stein, who was also the stage-manager, went on the stage before the curtain ascended to see that all was in order, and left his hat on the table of the room where he had to pay a call. The curtain went up. I made my entrance. It was my first night of "Diplomacy" and second on the stage, so you may imagine my feelings when I heard a loud whisper from

the wings from the stage-manager: "Miss Elliott, my hat. Please give me my hat!" I did not know what to do at first, but as the hoarse whispers went on thought out a way of restoring the hat to its owner. I looked at it as it lay on the table, then round the room. At the back was a window, showing the roofs of Paris. That was the only way, I decided, and forthwith, continuing my dialogue—which, of course, had nothing to do with the hat—walked to the window, opened it, and planted the hat, apparently, on a roof.

It was on this evening I experienced my first touch of stage-fright. I went off early, too early after my little speech, and waited in the wings without a notion as to when I should go on again. My memory went completely. I heard my name called several times, and eventually made up my mind it was time for me. Someone said, "Miss Elliott, this is your entrance," pointing to a door, but I thought it was not, and entered from another point, to find the two people on the stage had their backs to me. I went off again. Later in the evening, at the end of the act, my sister Maxine called me and scolded me for having left her without a shoe, which I ought to have brought in with me. They had grown tired of asking for me, and she had to manage as best she could with a slipperless foot.

AS DESDEMONA.
Photo. by Lizzie Caswall Smith.

How I entered my husband's company is rather a strange story. He was in Italy at the time, resting after an illness. His brother engaged the people for the company, but not being able to make up his mind about the leading woman, sent Sir Johnston a list of prospective leading ladies. My husband had not met me or seen me play, but one morning he sent off a telegram to his brother: "Engage Miss Gertrude Elliott as leading lady." I was engaged, and when he returned from Italy we went to the provinces in his repertory. The first part I played with him was Ophelia, and working under such a chief helped my sense of responsibility as to stage

IN "MICE AND MEN."

work to grow. This has increased with years, and every part finds one more anxious to do the best possible and more conscious of the difficulties to be encountered.

Sir Johnston's tour began in September, and in December he asked me to become his wife. You know that I accepted. It was a great surprise to me, because in the dramatic as in all the artistic professions one is inclined to place those who are masters of their art on a pedestal. One feels like a student in a *maestro's* atelier.

In January, 1902, at the Lyric Theatre was produced "Mice and Men," and I remember on one occasion my husband, in the character of Mark Embury, instead of saying "Mrs. Deborah, this is my ward," said, "Mrs. Deborah, this is my wife." We had not long been married, and the house were immensely amused at the slip of the tongue. Since "Mice and Men," I have appeared with my husband in "The Light that Failed," "Cæsar and Cleopatra," "The Merchant of Venice," etc., etc.

School days are happy days for English and American children. German boys and girls, on the other hand, have a dull time and such a long grind at books that I don't wonder they are cruel when they grow up. It is difficult to be cruel when you are happy.

A little school goes a long way, to my way of thinking. The most interesting people in the world are those who have been educated by life. Long hours of study and close application to books prevent the development of children. Their individuality is "cribbed, cabined, and confined" in this way—I think.

Such was not my opinion, however, as a small girl. Personally, I loved study, and crammed like mad always, and was so terribly "good" that when a general reproof was directed to the class I remember the tears rolling down my face—to the amused astonishment of the teacher.

At this time I was very shy. My father was proud of my whistling—an unusual accomplishment for a girl then—and used to beg me to whistle for friends, and offer me little bribes of sweets and the like. I loved to whistle, but can only remember being persuaded to do so "before people" on one occasion. Then I said I couldn't unless I turned my back, so I stood in the corner for my solo. This incident was used by Mrs. Ryley in "Mice and Men." Mark Embury, you may remember, asks Peggy to sing, and she replies: "I'll sing if my back is turned."

My little songs which I have sung all my life I have only given in public during the last year, and I feel more nervous in singing them than in acting.

My sister Maxine, who is six years older than I, used to always lead in everything—that is perhaps why I was so quiet. I was always known as "the little sister." Where Maxine went I followed, and I became so used to taking her lead that after I was married my husband had quite a little difficulty in getting me to enter rooms first.

I always looked very young for my age. Maxine, on the other hand, seemed grown-up at seventeen. We were very amused one day, on going into a shop together, to hear the assistant say to Maxine, "Madam, is this your little girl?" "No," said my sister, who has a keen sense of fun, "she is my grandchild." Maxine did, in fact, have little motherly airs when she fussed around me settling what I should wear, the colour of a frock or shape of a hat. My mother having died while I was young, she was "in charge," and fulfilled her responsibility most conscientiously. So much so, in fact, that I never bought any clothes, or settled any similar little personal matters for myself, until I married. Even now if Maxine chose clothes for me they would be exactly right, she always knew what was suitable and becoming to me.

We used to have great fun over my early stage appearances. I remember a part in which I had to look like a doll, and the excitement of getting the frock and making-up for the part. I have a photograph of myself in the dress, and look rather like the heroine of "La Poupée." Another photograph taken at the same time in the trained evening gowns that were then worn makes me look years older. A stranger confronted with both pictures would find it difficult to believe that they were taken at the same time.

When I first played Ophelia I wore a black gown in the mad scene. My husband designed the dress for me in which I appeared when he gave "Hamlet" in New York. This black gown gave me an agonized evening once. After the first act of "Hamlet" I went upstairs to my dressing-room to change, and instead of getting into another light gown, by some unhappy trick of the memory thought I had to dress for the "mad scene," and put on the black one. Presently I was "called." I said I was not due "on" yet, but they insisted, and my black gown was positively ripped off. In any other gown than black I could have gone on, but to wear black earlier would have robbed the mad scene of part of its effect. The light one put on, there

WITH SIR J. FORBES-ROBERTSON IN "THE LIGHT THAT FAILED."
Photo. by Lizzie Caswall Smith.

was not time to fasten it, but my hair fell down the back, and I rushed on the stage only just in time as Hamlet was saying very deliberately—wondering at my non-appearance—"Here's metal more attractive." I got through, but the shock and worry of it affected my voice. I could only speak in a tiny, whispering voice all the evening. My sister, who was sailing for America the next day, and had come a day's journey to see me as Ophelia, couldn't hear what I was saying!

It was dreadful. I hope I shall never have such an experience again.

This reminds me that my husband has designed a good many stage dresses. When Mary Anderson appeared as Rosalind her dress was of my husband's designing, and ever since all Rosalinds have adopted this fashion, which is a very becoming one.

My people, by the way, were not connected with the stage. As to my nationality, my father was Irish, my mother American. I was born in Rockland, Maine, U.S.A.

My sister Maxine preceded me on the stage. She gave me my first rehearsal, and coached me in my "Diplomacy" part. Maxine worked hard in telling me exactly how the part should be played; in fact, it was two o'clock a.m. before we got to bed. The next night I went on for the part, as I have already told, but believe my initial performance was an exact imitation of my sister's, as given in my bedroom overnight!

My father, I remember, was very much amused at the notion of my going on the stage. He wondered if I should ever make myself heard across the footlights, as I was so shy that I never spoke

AS OPHELIA.
Photo. by Sarony.

above a whisper in a room! Our two eldest little girls are ahead of me in this respect. Already they show a liking for the stage, and look forward to visits to the theatre. The eldest, Blossom, is most like her father, and shows a talent for painting. The second one, Jean, we call "the face-maker"; she pulls such faces and mimics people. All of which is interesting (?), but not important.

The dramatic profession is extraordinarily interesting, and I, in common with most actors, love it. People often wonder at the feats of memory an actor performs. This subject has always had a fascination for me. Some people find studying their parts and committing them to memory quite easy. Others have to "stodge" at their work. I like to study at rehearsal—that is, to let the words come with the action, not peg away at them at home.

In "Mice and Men," after playing for several months, I began to feel nervous lest I should "dry up" (as players call it when the words suddenly go). One night I looked toward the prompt-corner, but there was not a sign of the prompter, upon which came a dead pause. To my surprise and relief the word came almost immediately from somewhere at the back of the stage. Shiel Barry, a boy then, was the prompter. He became an interesting actor, and when war broke out volunteered, and was killed in action. Shiel Barry had a genius for prompting. He knew every word of the play, and when a pause came, no matter who was speaking, he supplied the right word, and no one would hear but the actor. Prompting is like accompanying, it seems a gift, and is quite separate from good acting.

In the old days the theatre must have been much more fun to the players than it is now, though it is pleasant enough for most of us, and a greater test of one's powers, for then many rehearsals were not usual, and the actors became very clever and quick in adjusting themselves promptly to all sorts of unforeseen conditions and "gagging."

Some of the notions one cherishes as a beginner are curious. I thought at one time to act an intense, melancholy part one ought to eat very little and get oneself into the state of mind and body that had to be depicted. This is, of course, a grave mistake. To do his best an actor must be in good health, so that he has the necessary grip and control. And never must he allow his emotion to dominate him; at least, that is how it seems to me. The intelligence should watch all the time and intuition tell exactly when the effect is gained and when the note must be changed. If one gets out of hand the audience does too. But I am afraid I am lecturing. It is evidently time for me to stop!

ACROSTICS.

The Beginning of a New Series.

PRIZES to the value of twelve guineas are offered for the solution of the six acrostics of the series now beginning.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 31.

Noted lawyer let us see,
Born in Seventeen Twenty-three;
Dusky bit of rock is he,
Of his "Commentaries" free.

1. Lawyer now of different kind,
   Him in Bevis Marks we find.
2. Since of all this *finis* is,
   Let the cobbler stick to his.
3. Where John Bull "I love" would say,
   This was once the Roman way.
4. This, on Royal head, to-day
   More than five bob cost, I'd say.
5. Heaven frustrate his tricks, we pray,
   Though we call him Jack in play.

QUÆSTOR.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 32.

Well beaten and beneath our feet,
That both should be is very meet.

1. When you're run down, pulls you together.
2. Oft stolen during rainy weather.
3. Has dined not wisely, but too well.
4. Supplies the enemy with shell.
5. The people who enjoy the vote.
6. Name of a kind of sailing-boat. KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostics 31 *and* 32 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on August 8th.*

The answer to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper, and each must be signed with the solver's pseudonym. Two answers may be sent to any or every light.

ANSWER TO No. 30.

1.	W	o l	F
2.	A	l b i r e	O
3.	T	i n e a	U
4.	E	d m o n t o	N
5.	R	u p a i y a	T
6.	M	o r e n	A
7.	A	s h a n t	I
8.	N	u	N

NOTES.—Light 1. Wolf, flow. 2. The star, Beta Cygni in the mouth of the Swan, is very near the constellation Vulpecula cum Ansere. 3. Harriet Martineau; half of martin. 4. Ten miles from Ware. Cowper, *The Diverting History of John Gilpin.* 5. Kipling, *Departmental Ditties.* 6. It is uncertain whether "sierra" means "a saw"; Sierra Morena, and Sierra Nevada; Nevada, one of the United States. 7. Ash, anti; tobacco ash; King Coffee. 8. He and Nun, letters in both the Hebrew and Arabic alphabets.

For the fourth light of No. 27, "Campaigni(ng)" is accepted as a good answer.

The Acrostic Editor would be glad if all the "Pats" and "Bobs" would adopt other pseudonyms: so many solvers have chosen these names that there is a possibility of confusion. Solvers generally should not change their pseudonyms unless requested to do so.

JEEVES AND THE HARD-BOILED EGG.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

SOMETIMES of a morning, as I've sat in bed sucking down the early cup of tea and watched my man Jeeves flitting about the room and putting out the raiment for the day, I've wondered what the deuce I should do if the fellow ever took it into his head to leave me. It's not so bad now I'm in New York, but in London the anxiety was frightful. There used to be all sorts of attempts on the part of low blighters to sneak him away from me. Young Reggie Foljambe to my certain knowledge offered him double what I was giving him, and Alistair Bingham-Reeves, who's got a valet who had been known to press his trousers sideways, used to look at him, when he came to see me, with a kind of glittering, hungry eye which disturbed me deucedly. Bally pirates!

The thing, you see, is that Jeeves is so dashed competent. You can spot it even in the way he shoves studs into a shirt.

I rely on him absolutely in every crisis, and he never lets me down. And, what's more, he can always be counted on to extend himself on behalf of any pal of mine who happens to be to all appearances knee-deep in the bouillon. Take the rather rummy case, for instance, of dear old Bicky and his uncle, the hard-boiled egg.

It happened after I had been in America for a few months. I got back to the flat latish one night, and when Jeeves brought me the final drink he said :—

"Mr. Bickersteth called to see you this evening, sir, while you were out."

"Oh?" I said.

"Twice, sir. He appeared a trifle agitated."

"What, pipped?"

"He gave that impression, sir."

I sipped the whisky. I was sorry if Bicky was in trouble, but, as a matter of fact, I was rather glad to have something I could discuss freely with Jeeves just then, because things had been a bit strained between us for some time, and it had been rather difficult to hit on anything to talk about that wasn't apt to take a personal turn. You see, I had decided—rightly or wrongly—to grow a moustache, and this had cut Jeeves to the quick. He couldn't stick the thing at any price, and I had been living ever since in an atmosphere of bally disapproval till I was getting jolly well fed up with it. What I mean is, while there's no doubt that in certain matters of dress Jeeves' judgment is absolutely sound and should be followed, it seemed to me that it was getting a bit too thick if he was going to edit my face as well as my costume. No one can call me an unreasonable chappie, and many's the time I've given in like a lamb when Jeeves has voted against one of my pet suits or ties; but when it comes to a valet's staking out a claim on your upper lip you've simply got to have a bit of the good old bulldog pluck and defy the blighter.

"He said that he would call again later, sir."

"Something must be up, Jeeves."

"Yes, sir."

I gave the moustache a thoughtful twirl. It seemed to hurt Jeeves a good deal, so I chucked it.

"I see by the paper, sir, that Mr. Bickersteth's uncle is arriving on the *Carmantic*."

"Yes?"

"His Grace the Duke of Chiswick, sir."

This was news to me, that Bicky's uncle was a duke. Rum, how little one knows about one's pals! I had met Bicky for the first time at a species of beano or jamboree down in Washington Square, not long after my arrival in New York. I suppose I was a bit homesick at the time, and I rather took to Bicky when I found that he was an Englishman and had, in fact, been up at Oxford with me. Besides, he was a frightful chump, so we naturally drifted together; and while we were taking a quiet snort in a corner that wasn't all cluttered up with artists and sculptors and what not, he furthermore endeared himself to me by a most extraordinarily gifted imitation of a bull-terrier chasing a cat up a tree. But, though we had subsequently become extremely pally, all I really knew about him was that he was generally hard up, and had an uncle who relieved the strain a bit from time to time by sending him monthly remittances.

"If the Duke of Chiswick is his uncle," I said, "why hasn't he a title? Why isn't he Lord What-Not?"

"Mr. Bickersteth is the son of his grace's late sister, sir, who married Captain Rollo Bickersteth of the Coldstream Guards."

Jeeves knows everything.

"Is Mr. Bickersteth's father dead too?"

"Yes, sir."

"Leave any money?"

"No, sir."

I began to understand why poor old Bicky was always more or less on the rocks. To the casual and irreflective observer, if you know what I mean, it may sound a pretty good wheeze having a duke for an uncle, but the trouble about old Chiswick was that, though an extremely wealthy old buster, owning half London and about five counties up north, he was notoriously the most prudent spender in England. He was what American chappies would call a hard-boiled egg. If Bicky's people hadn't left him anything and he depended on what he could prise out of the old duke, he was in a pretty bad way. Not that that explained why he was hunting me like this, because he was a chap who never borrowed money. He said he wanted to keep his pals, so never bit anyone's ear on principle.

At this juncture the door-bell rang. Jeeves floated out to answer it.

"Yes, sir. Mr. Wooster has just returned," I heard him say. And Bicky came trickling in, looking pretty sorry for himself.

"Halloa, Bicky!" I said. "Jeeves told me you had been trying to get me. Jeeves, bring another glass, and let the revels commence. What's the trouble, Bicky?"

"I'm in a hole, Bertie. I want your advice."

"Say on, old lad!"

"My uncle's turning up to-morrow, Bertie."

"So Jeeves told me."

"The Duke of Chiswick, you know."

"So Jeeves told me."

Bicky seemed a bit surprised.

"Jeeves seems to know everything."

"Rather rummily, that's exactly what I was thinking just now myself."

"Well, I wish," said Bicky, gloomily, "that he knew a way to get me out of the hole I'm in."

Jeeves shimmered in with the glass, and stuck it competently on the table.

"Mr. Bickersteth is in a bit of a hole, Jeeves," I said, "and wants you to rally round."

"Very good, sir."

Bicky looked a bit doubtful.

"Well, of course, you know, Bertie, this thing is by way of being a bit private and all that."

"I shouldn't worry about that, old top. I bet Jeeves knows all about it already. Don't you, Jeeves?"

"Yes, sir."

"Eh?" said Bicky, rattled.

"I am open to correction, sir, but is not your dilemma due to the fact that you are at a loss to explain to his grace why you are in New York instead of in Colorado?"

Bicky rocked like a jelly in a high wind.

"I HAD DECIDED—RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY—TO GROW A MOUSTACHE, AND THIS HAD CUT JEEVES TO THE QUICK."

"How the deuce do you know anything about it?"

"I chanced to meet his grace's butler before we left England. He informed me that he happened to overhear his grace speaking to you on the matter, sir, as he passed the library-door."

Bicky gave a hollow sort of laugh.

"Well, as everybody seems to know all about it, there's no need to try to keep it dark. The old boy turfed me out, Bertie, because he said I was a brainless nincompoop. The idea was that he would give me a remittance on condition that I dashed out to some blighted locality of the name of Colorado and learned farming or ranching, or whatever they call it, at some bally ranch or farm or whatever it's called. I didn't fancy the idea a bit. I should have had to ride horses and pursue cows, and so forth. I hate horses. They bite at you. I was all against the scheme. At the same time, don't you know, I had to have that remittance."

"I get you absolutely, dear boy."

"Well, when I got to New York it looked a decent sort of place to me, so I thought it would be a pretty sound notion to stop here. So I cabled to my uncle telling him that I had dropped into a good business wheeze in the city and wanted to chuck the ranch idea. He wrote back that it was all right, and here I've been ever since. He thinks I'm doing well at something or other over here. I never dreamed, don't you know, that he would ever come out here. What on earth am I to do?"

"Jeeves," I said, "what on earth is Mr. Bickersteth to do?"

"You see," said Bicky, "I had a wireless from him to say that he was coming to stay with me—to save hotel bills, I suppose. I've always given him the impression that I was living in pretty good style. I can't have him to stay at my boarding-house."

"Thought of anything, Jeeves?" I said.

"To what extent, sir, if the question is not a delicate one, are you prepared to assist Mr. Bickersteth?"

"I'll do anything I can for you, of course, Bicky, old man."

"Then, if I might make the suggestion, sir, you might lend Mr. Bickersteth——"

"No, by Jove!" said Bicky, firmly. "I never have touched you, Bertie, and I'm not going to start now. I may be a chump, but it's my boast that I don't owe a penny to a single soul—not counting tradesmen, of course."

"I was about to suggest, sir, that you might lend Mr. Bickersteth this flat. Mr. Bickersteth could give his grace the impression that he was the owner of it. With your permission I could convey the notion that I was in Mr. Bickersteth's employment and not in yours. You would be residing here temporarily as Mr. Bickersteth's guest. His grace would occupy the second spare bedroom. I fancy that you would find this answer satisfactorily, sir."

Bicky had stopped rocking himself and was staring at Jeeves in an awed sort of way.

"I would advocate the dispatching of a wireless message to his grace on board the vessel, notifying him of the change of address. Mr. Bickersteth could meet his grace at the dock and proceed directly here. Will that meet the situation, sir?"

"Absolutely."

"Thank you, sir."

Bicky followed him with his eye till the door closed.

"How does he do it, Bertie?" he said. "I'll tell you what I think it is. I believe it's something to do with the shape of his head. Have you ever noticed his head, Bertie, old man? It sort of sticks out at the back!"

I hopped out of bed pretty early next morning, so as to be among those present when the old boy should arrive. I knew from experience that these ocean liners fetch up at the dock at a deucedly ungodly hour. It wasn't much after nine by the time I'd dressed and had my morning tea and was leaning out of the window, watching the street for Bicky and his uncle. It was one of those jolly, peaceful mornings that make a chappie wish he'd got a soul or something, and I was just brooding on life in general when I became aware of the dickens of a spat in progress down below. A taxi had driven up, and an old boy in a top hat had got out and was kicking up a frightful row about the fare. As far as I could make out, he was trying to get the cab chappie to switch from New York to London prices, and the cab chappie had apparently never heard of London before, and didn't seem to think a lot of it now. The old boy said that in London the trip would have set him back eightpence; and the cabby said he should worry. I called to Jeeves.

"The duke has arrived, Jeeves."

"Yes, sir?"

"That'll be him at the door now."

Jeeves made a long arm and opened the front door, and the old boy crawled in, looking licked to a splinter.

"How do you do, sir?" I said, bustling up and being the ray of sunshine. "Your nephew went down to the dock to meet you, but you must have missed him. My name's Wooster, don't you know. Great pal of Bicky's, and all that sort of thing. I'm staying with him, you know. Would you like a cup of tea? Jeeves, bring a cup of tea."

Old Chiswick had sunk into an armchair and was looking about the room.

"Does this luxurious flat belong to my nephew Francis?"

"Absolutely."

"It must be terribly expensive."

"Pretty well, of course. Everything costs a lot over here, you know."

He moaned. Jeeves filtered in with the tea. Old Chiswick took a stab at it to restore his tissues, and nodded.

"A terrible country, Mr. Wooster! A terrible country! Nearly eight shillings for a short cab-drive! Iniquitous!" He took another look round the room. It seemed to fascinate him. "Have you any idea how much my nephew pays for this flat, Mr. Wooster?"

"About two hundred dollars a month, I believe."

"What! Forty pounds a month!"

I began to see that, unless I made the thing a bit more plausible, the scheme might turn out a frost. I could guess what the old boy was thinking. He was trying to square all this prosperity with what he knew of poor old Bicky. And one had to admit that it took a lot of squaring, for dear old Bicky, though a stout fellow and absolutely unrivalled as an imitator of bull-terriers and cats, was in many ways one of the most pronounced fatheads that ever pulled on a suit of gents' underwear.

"I suppose it seems rummy to you," I said, "but the fact is New York often bucks chappies up and makes them show a flash of speed that you wouldn't have imagined them capable of. It sort of develops them. Something in the air, don't you know. I imagine that Bicky in the past, when you knew him, may have been something of a chump, but it's quite different now. Devilish efficient sort of chappie, and looked on in commercial circles as quite the nib!"

"I am amazed! What is the nature of my nephew's business, Mr. Wooster?"

"Oh, just business, don't you know. The same sort of thing Carnegie and Rockefeller and all these coves do, you know." I slid for the door. "Awfully sorry to leave you, but I've got to meet some of the lads elsewhere."

Coming out of the lift I met Bicky bustling in from the street.

"Halloa, Bertie! I missed him. Has he turned up?"

"He's upstairs now, having some tea."

"What does he think of it all?"

"He's absolutely rattled."

"Ripping! I'll be toddling up, then. Toodle-oo, Bertie, old man. See you later."

"Pip-pip, Bicky, dear boy."

He trotted off, full of merriment and good cheer, and I went off to the club to sit in the window and watch the traffic coming up one way and going down the other.

It was latish in the evening when I looked in at the flat to dress for dinner.

"Where's everybody, Jeeves?" I said, finding no little feet pattering about the place. "Gone out?"

"His grace desired to see some of the sights of the city, sir. Mr. Bickersteth is acting as his escort. I fancy their immediate objective was Grant's Tomb."

"I suppose Mr. Bickersteth is a bit braced at the way things are going—what?"

"Sir?"

"I say, I take it that Mr. Bickersteth is tolerably full of beans."

"Not altogether, sir."

"What's his trouble now?"

"The scheme which I took the liberty of suggesting to Mr. Bickersteth and yourself has, unfortunately, not answered entirely satisfactorily, sir."

"Surely the duke believes that Mr. Bickersteth is doing well in business, and all that sort of thing?"

"Exactly, sir. With the result that he has decided to cancel Mr. Bickersteth's monthly allowance, on the ground that, as Mr. Bickersteth is doing so well on his own account, he no longer requires pecuniary assistance."

"Great Scot, Jeeves! This is awful!"

"Somewhat disturbing, sir."

"I never expected anything like this!"

"I confess I scarcely anticipated the contingency myself, sir."

"I suppose it bowled the poor blighter over absolutely?"

"Mr. Bickersteth appeared somewhat taken aback, sir."

My heart bled for Bicky.

"We must do something, Jeeves."

"Yes, sir."

"Can you think of anything?"

"Not at the moment, sir."

"There must be something we can do."

"It was a maxim of one of my former employers, sir—as I believe I mentioned to you once before—the present Lord Bridgnorth, that there is always a way. I remember his lordship using the expression on the occasion—he was then a business gentleman and had not yet received his title—when a patent hair-restorer which he chanced to be promoting failed to attract the public. He put it on the market under another name as a depilatory, and amassed a substantial fortune. I have generally found his lordship's aphorism based on sound foundations. No doubt we shall be able to discover some solution of Mr. Bickersteth's difficulty, sir."

"Well, have a stab at it, Jeeves!"

"I will spare no pains, sir."

I went and dressed sadly. It will show you pretty well how pipped I was when I tell you that I as near as a toucher put on a white tie with a dinner-jacket. I sallied out for a bit of food more to pass the time than because I wanted it. It seemed brutal to be wading into the bill of fare with poor old Bicky headed for the breadline.

When I got back old Chiswick had gone to bed, but Bicky was there, hunched up in an armchair, brooding pretty tensely, with a cigarette hanging out of the corner of his mouth and a more or less glassy stare in his eyes. He had the aspect of one who had been soaked with what the newspaper chappies call "some blunt instrument."

"This is a bit thick, old thing—what!" I said.

He picked up his glass and drained it feverishly, overlooking the fact that it hadn't anything in it.

"I'm done, Bertie!" he said.

"HE HAD THE ASPECT OF ONE WHO HAD BEEN SOAKED WITH WHAT THE NEWSPAPER CHAPPIES CALL 'SOME BLUNT INSTRUMENT.'"

He had another go at the glass. It didn't seem to do him any good.

"If only this had happened a week later, Bertie! My next month's money was due to roll in on Saturday. I could have worked a wheeze I've been reading about in the magazine advertisements. It seems that you can make a dashed amount of money if you can only collect a few dollars and start a chicken-farm. Jolly sound scheme, Bertie! Say you buy a hen—call it one hen for the sake of argument. It lays an egg every day of the week. You sell the eggs seven for twenty-five cents. Keep of hen costs nothing. Profit practically twenty-five cents on every seven eggs. Or look at it in another way: Suppose you have a dozen hens. Each of the hens has a dozen chickens. The chickens grow up and have more chickens. Why, in no time you'd have the place covered knee-deep in hens, all laying eggs at twenty-five cents for every seven. You'd

make a fortune. Jolly life, too, keeping hens!" He had begun to get quite worked up at the thought of it, but he slopped back in his chair at this juncture with a good deal of gloom. "But, of course, it's no good," he said, "because I haven't the cash."

"You've only to say the word, you know, Bicky, old top."

"Thanks awfully, Bertie, but I'm not going to sponge on you."

That's always the way in this world. The chappies you'd like to lend money to won't let you, whereas the chappies you don't want to lend it to will do everything except actually stand you on your head and lift the specie out of your pockets. As a lad who has always rolled tolerably freely in the right stuff, I've had lots of experience of the second class. Many's the time, back in London, I've hurried along Piccadilly and felt the hot breath of the toucher on the back of my neck and heard his sharp, excited yapping as he closed in on me. I've simply spent my life scattering largesse to blighters I didn't care a hang for; yet here was I now, dripping doubloons and pieces of eight and longing to hand them over, and Bicky, poor fish, absolutely on his uppers, not taking any at any price.

"Well, there's only one hope, then."

"What's that?"

"Jeeves."

"Sir?"

There was Jeeves, standing behind me, full of zeal. In this matter of shimmering into rooms the chappie is rummy to a degree. You're sitting in the old arm-chair, thinking of this and that, and then suddenly you look up, and there he is. He moves from point to point with as little uproar as a jelly-fish. The thing startled poor old Bicky considerably. He rose from his seat like a rocketing pheasant. I'm used to Jeeves now, but often in the days when he first came to me I've bitten my tongue freely on finding him unexpectedly in my midst.

"Did you call, sir?"

"Oh, there you are, Jeeves!"

"Precisely, sir."

"Jeeves, Mr. Bickersteth is still up the pole. Any ideas?"

"Why, yes, sir. Since we had our recent conversation I fancy I have found what may prove a solution. I do not wish to appear to be taking a liberty, sir, but I think that we have overlooked his grace's potentialities as a source of revenue."

Bicky laughed what I have sometimes seen described as a hollow, mocking laugh, a sort of bitter cackle from the back of the throat, rather like a gargle.

"I do not allude, sir," explained Jeeves, "to the possibility of inducing his grace to part with money. I am taking the liberty of regarding his grace in the light of an at present—if I may say so—useless property, which is capable of being developed."

Bicky looked at me in a helpless kind of way. I'm bound to say I didn't get it myself.

"Couldn't you make it a bit easier, Jeeves?"

"In a nutshell, sir, what I mean is this: His grace is, in a sense, a prominent personage. The inhabitants of this country, as no doubt you are aware, sir, are peculiarly addicted to shaking hands with prominent personages. It occurred to me that Mr. Bickersteth or yourself might know of persons who would be willing to pay a small fee—let us say two dollars or three—for the privilege of an introduction, including handshake, to his grace."

Bicky didn't seem to think much of it.

"Do you mean to say that anyone would be mug enough to part with solid cash just to shake hands with my uncle?"

"I have an aunt, sir, who paid five shillings to a young fellow for bringing a moving-picture actor to tea at her house one Sunday. It gave her social standing among the neighbours."

Bicky wavered.

"If you think it could be done——"

"I feel convinced of it, sir."

"What do you think, Bertie?"

"I'm for it, old boy, absolutely. A very brainy wheeze."

"Thank you, sir. Will there be anything further? Good night, sir."

And he floated out, leaving us to discuss details.

Until we started this business of floating old Chiswick as a money-making proposition I had never realized what a perfectly foul time those Stock Exchange chappies must have when the public isn't biting freely. Nowadays I read that bit they put in the financial reports about "The market opened quietly" with a sympathetic eye, for, by Jove, it certainly opened quietly for us! You'd hardly believe how difficult it was to interest the public and make them take a flutter on the old boy. By the end of a week the only name we had on our list was a delicatessen-store keeper down in Bicky's part of the town, and as he wanted us to take it out in sliced ham instead of cash that didn't help much. There was a gleam of light when the brother of Bicky's pawnbroker offered ten dollars, money down, for an introduction to old Chiswick, but the deal fell through, owing to its turning out that the chap was an anarchist and intended to kick the old boy instead of shaking hands with him. At that, it took me the deuce of a time to persuade Bicky not to grab the cash and let things take their course. He seemed to regard the pawnbroker's brother rather as a sportsman and benefactor of his species than otherwise.

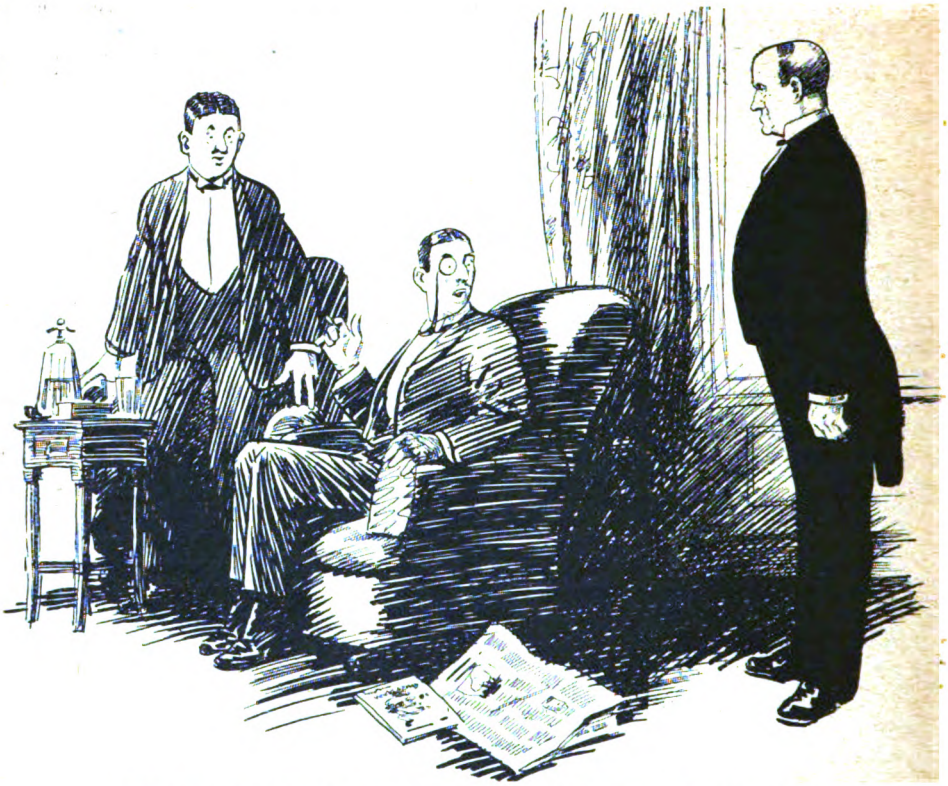
The whole thing, I'm inclined to think, would have been off if it hadn't been for Jeeves. There is no doubt that Jeeves is in a class of his own. In the matter of brain and resource I don't think I have ever met a chappie so supremely like mother made. He trickled into my room one morning with the good old cup of tea, and intimated that there was something doing.

"Might I speak to you with regard to that matter of his grace, sir?"

"It's all off. We've decided to chuck it."

"Sir?"

"It won't work. We can't get anybody to come."



"JEEVES, MR. BICKERSTETH IS STILL UP THE POLE. ANY IDEAS?"

"I fancy I can arrange that aspect of the matter, sir."

"Do you mean to say you've managed to get anybody?"

"Yes, sir. Eighty-seven gentlemen from Birdsburg, sir."

I sat up in bed and spilt the tea.

"Birdsburg?"

"Birdsburg, Missouri, sir."

"How did you get them?"

"I happened last night, sir, as you had intimated that you would be absent from home, to attend a theatrical performance, and entered into conversation between the acts with the occupant of the adjoining seat. I had observed that he was wearing a somewhat ornate decoration in his buttonhole, sir—a large blue button with the words 'Boost for Birdsburg' upon it in red letters—scarcely a judicious addition to a gentleman's evening costume. To my surprise I noticed that the auditorium was full of persons similarly decorated. I ventured to inquire the explanation, and was informed that these gentlemen, forming a party of eighty-seven, are a convention from a town of the name of Birdsburg in the State of Missouri. Their visit, I gathered, was purely of a social and pleasurable nature, and my informant spoke at some length of the entertainments arranged for their stay in the city. It was when he related with a considerable amount of satisfaction and pride that a deputation of their number had been introduced to and had shaken hands with a well-known prize-fighter that it occurred to me to broach the subject of his grace. To make a long story short, sir, I have arranged, subject to your approval, that the entire convention shall be presented to his grace to-morrow afternoon."

I was amazed. This chappie was a Napoleon.

"Eighy-seven, Jeeves! At how much a head?"

"I was obliged to agree to a reduction for quantity, sir. The terms finally arrived at were one hundred and fifty dollars for the party."

I thought a bit.

"Payable in advance?"

"No, sir. I endeavoured to obtain payment in advance, but was not successful."

"Well, anyway, when we get it I'll make it up to five hundred. Bicky'll never know. Do you suppose Mr. Bickersteth would suspect anything, Jeeves, if I made it up to five hundred?"

"I fancy not, sir. Mr. Bickersteth is an agreeable gentleman, but not bright."

"All right, then. After breakfast run down to the bank and get me some money."

"Yes, sir."

"You know, you're a bit of a marvel, Jeeves."

"Thank you, sir."

"Right-o!"

"Very good, sir."

When I took dear old Bicky aside in the course of the morning and told him what had happened he nearly broke down. He tottered into the sitting-room and buttonholed old Chiswick, who was reading the comic section of the morning paper with a kind of grim resolution.

"Uncle," he said, "are you doing anything special to-morrow afternoon? I mean to say, I've asked a few of my pals in to meet you, don't you know."

The old boy cocked a speculative eye at him.

"There will be no reporters among them?"

"Reporters? Rather not! Why?"

"I refuse to be badgered by reporters. There were a number of adhesive young men who endeavoured to elicit from me my views on America while the boat was approaching the dock. I will not be subjected to this persecution again."

"That'll be absolutely all right, uncle. There won't be a newspaper-man in the place."

"In that case I shall be glad to make the acquaintance of your friends."

"You'll shake hands with them, and so forth?"

"I shall naturally order my behaviour according to the accepted rules of civilized intercourse."

Bicky thanked him heartily and came off to lunch with me at the club, where he babbled freely of hens, incubators, and other rotten things.

After mature consideration we had decided to unleash the Birdsburg contingent on the old boy ten at a time. Jeeves brought his theatre-pal round to see us, and we arranged the whole thing with him. A very decent chappie, but rather inclined to collar the conversation and turn it in the direction of his home-town's new water-supply system. We settled that, as an hour was about all he would be likely to stand, each gang should consider itself entitled to seven minutes of the duke's society by Jeeves' stop-watch, and that when their time was up Jeeves should slide into the room and cough meaningly. Then we parted with what I believe are called mutual expressions of good-will, the Birdsburg chappie extending a cordial invitation to us all to pop out some day and take a look at the new water-supply system, for which we thanked him.

Next day the deputation rolled in. The first shift consisted of the cove we had met and nine others almost exactly like him in every respect. They all looked deuced keen and businesslike, as if from youth up they had been working in the office and catching the boss's eye and what not. They shook hands with the old boy with a good deal of apparent satisfaction—all except one chappie, who seemed to be brooding about something—and then they stood off and became chatty.

"What message have you for Birdsburg, duke?" asked our pal.

The old boy seemed a bit rattled.

"I have never been to Birdsburg."

The chappie seemed pained.

"You should pay it a visit," he said. "The most rapidly-growing city in the country. Boost for Birdsburg!"

"Boost for Birdsburg!" said the other chappies reverently.

The chappie who had been brooding suddenly gave tongue.

"Say!"

He was a stout sort of well-fed cove with one of those determined chins and a cold eye.

The assemblage looked at him.

"As a matter of business," said the chappie—"mind you, I'm not questioning anybody's good faith, but, as a matter of strict business—I think this gentleman here ought to put himself on record before witnesses as stating that he really is a duke."

"What do you mean, sir?" cried the old boy, getting purple.

"No offence, simply business. I'm not saying anything, mind you, but there's one thing that seems kind of funny to me. This gentleman here says his name's Mr. Bickersteth, as I understand it. Well, if you're the Duke of Chiswick, why isn't he Lord Percy Something? I've read English novels, and I know all about it."

"This is monstrous!"

"Now don't get hot under the collar. I'm only asking. I've a right to know. You're going to take our money, so it's only fair that we should see that we get our money's worth."

The water-supply cove chipped in:—

"You're quite right, Simms. I overlooked that when making the agreement. You see, gentlemen, as business men we've a right to reasonable guarantees of good faith. We are paying Mr. Bickersteth here a hundred and fifty dollars for this reception, and we naturally want to know——"

Old Chiswick gave Bicky a searching look; then he turned to the water-supply chappie. He was frightfully calm.

"I can assure you that I know nothing of this," he said, quite politely. "I should be grateful if you would explain."

"Well, we arranged with Mr. Bickersteth that eighty-seven citizens of Birdsburg should have the privilege of meeting and shaking hands with you for a financial consideration mutually arranged, and what my friend Simms here means—and I'm with him—is that we have only Mr. Bickersteth's word for it—and he is a stranger to us—that you are the Duke of Chiswick at all."

Old Chiswick gulped.

"Allow me to assure you, sir," he said, in a rummy kind of voice, "that I am the Duke of Chiswick."

"Then that's all right," said the chappie, heartily. "That was all we wanted to know. Let the thing go on."

"I am sorry to say," said old Chiswick, "that it cannot go on. I am feeling a little tired. I fear I must ask to be excused."

"But there are seventy-seven of the boys waiting round the corner at this moment, duke, to be introduced to you."

"I fear I must disappoint them."

"But in that case the deal would have to be off."

"That is a matter for you and my nephew to discuss."

The chappie seemed troubled.

"You really won't meet the rest of them?"

"No!"

"Well, then, I guess we'll be going."

They went out, and there was a pretty solid silence. Then old Chiswick turned to Bicky:—

"Well?"

Bicky didn't seem to have anything to say.

"Was it true what that man said?"

"Yes, uncle."

"What do you mean by playing this trick?"

Bicky seemed pretty well knocked out, so I put in a word:—

"I think you'd better explain the whole thing, Bicky, old top."

Bicky's Adam's-apple jumped about a bit; then he started:—

"You see, you had cut off my allowance, uncle, and I wanted a bit of money to start a chicken farm. I mean to say it's an absolute cert if you once get a bit of capital. You buy a hen, and it lays an egg every day of the week, and you sell the eggs, say, seven for twenty-five cents.

"Keep of hen costs nothing. Profit practically——"

"What is all this nonsense about hens? You led me to suppose you were a substantial business man."

"Old Bicky rather exaggerated, sir," I said, helping the chappie out. "The fact is, the poor old lad is absolutely dependent on that remittance of yours, and when you cut it off, don't you know, he was pretty solidly in the soup, and had to think of some way of closing in on a bit of the ready pretty quick. That's why we thought of this hand-shaking scheme."

Old Chiswick foamed at the mouth.

"So you have lied to me! You have deliberately deceived me as to your financial status!"

"Poor old Bicky didn't want to go to that ranch," I explained. "He doesn't like cows and horses, but he rather thinks he would be hot stuff among the hens. All he wants is a bit of capital. Don't you think it would be rather a wheeze if you were to——"

"After what has happened? After this—this deceit and foolery? Not a penny!"

"But——"

"'ALLOW ME TO ASSURE YOU, SIR,' HE SAID, IN A RUMMY
"'THEN THAT'S ALL RIGHT,' SAID THE CHAPPIE, HEARTILY. 'THAT

"Not a penny!"

There was a respectful cough in the background.

"If I might make a suggestion, sir?"

Jeeves was standing on the horizon, looking devilish brainy.

"Go ahead, Jeeves!" I said.

"I would merely suggest, sir, that if Mr. Bickersteth is in need of a little ready money, and is at a loss to obtain it elsewhere, he might secure the sum he requires by describing the occurrences of this afternoon for the Sunday issue of one of the more spirited and enterprising newspapers."

"By Jove!" I said.

"By George!" said Bicky.

"Great heavens!" said old Chiswick.

"Very good, sir," said Jeeves.

Bicky turned to old Chiswick with a gleaming eye.

"Jeeves is right! I'll do it! The *Chronicle* would jump at it. They eat that sort of stuff."

Old Chiswick gave a kind of moaning howl.

"I absolutely forbid you, Francis, to do this thing!"

"That's all very well," said Bicky, wonderfully braced, "but if I can't get the money any other way——"

KIND OF VOICE, 'THAT I AM THE DUKE OF CHISWICK.'" WAS ALL WE WANTED TO KNOW. LET THE THING GO ON.'"

"Wait! Er—wait, my boy! You are so impetuous! We might arrange something."

"I won't go to that bally ranch."

"No, no! No, no, my boy! I would not suggest it. I would not for a moment suggest it. I—I think——" He seemed to have a bit of a struggle with himself. "I—I think that, on the whole, it would be best if you returned with me to England. I—I might—in fact, I think I see my way to doing—to—I might be able to utilize your services in some secretarial position."

"I shouldn't mind that."

"I should not be able to offer you a salary, but, as you know, in English political life the unpaid secretary is a recognized figure——"

"The only figure I'll recognize," said Bicky, firmly, "is five hundred quid a year, paid quarterly."

"My dear boy!"

"Absolutely!"

"But your recompense, my dear Francis, would consist in the unrivalled opportunities you would have, as my secretary, to gain experience, to accustom yourself to the intricacies of political life, to—in fact, you would be in an exceedingly advantageous position."

"Five hundred a year!" said Bicky, rolling it round his tongue. "Why, that would be nothing to what I could make if I started a chicken-farm. It stands to reason. Suppose you have a dozen hens. Each of the hens has a dozen chickens. After a bit the chickens grow up and have a dozen chickens each themselves, and then they all start laying eggs! There's a fortune in it. You can get anything you like for eggs in America. Chappies keep them on ice for years and years, and don't sell them till they fetch about a dollar a whirl. You don't think I'm going to chuck a future like this for anything under five hundred o' goblins a year—what?"

A look of anguish passed over old Chiswick's face, then he seemed to be resigned to it. "Very well, my boy," he said.

"What-o!" said Bicky. "All right, then."

"Jeeves," I said. Bicky had taken the old boy off to dinner to celebrate, and we were alone. "Jeeves, this has been one of your best efforts."

"Thank you, sir."

"It beats me how you do it."

"Yes, sir."

"The only trouble is you haven't got much out of it—what!"

"I fancy Mr. Bickersteth intends—I judge from his remarks—to signify his appreciation of anything I have been fortunate enough to do to assist him, at some later date when he is in a more favourable position to do so."

"It isn't enough, Jeeves!"

"Sir?"

It was a wrench, but I felt it was the only possible thing to be done.

"Bring my shaving things."

A gleam of hope shone in the chappie's eye, mixed with doubt.

"You mean, sir?"

"And shave off my moustache."

There was a moment's silence. I could see the fellow was deeply moved.

"Thank you very much indeed, sir," he said, in a low voice, and popped off.

The Reynolds Group.

By ROLAND PERTWEE.

Illustrated by E. S. Hodgson.

"THIS," said Lord Louis Lewis, pointing to a three-quarter-length picture, which was reclining against a pillar at the foot of the staircase, "is a Reynolds. The lady represented was, I believe, a very great aunt of mine. The light is indifferent, but even so the touch of the master is unmistakable."

Mr. Russell Yorke adjusted his pince-nez.

"A very remarkable piece of painting," he observed.

"You are right," assented Lord Louis; "but, on the other hand, the composition is extremely bad."

"I was about to say as much," agreed Mr. Yorke. "I am almost tempted to believe that this portrait has been cut down."

Lord Louis nodded. "The possibility had occurred to me," he said. "My poor cousin, from whom I acquired it, after his decease, was the type of man who would not think twice about committing such an act."

"It is hard to conceive any relative of yours, Lord Louis, being capable of such a wanton act," Mr. Yorke commented.

"Ah, Mr. Yorke," said Lord Louis, "the artistic temperament was not evenly distributed amongst the members of my family. The particular branch of which my unhappy cousin was the last descendant was singularly free from æsthetic tastes."

"You speak of your *unhappy* cousin?" queried Mr. Yorke.

"For two reasons," replied Lord Louis. "The first a conventional one, because he is no longer with us, the second because he hastened his own end by alcoholic excess. During the last few years of his life he was seldom sober, and was ministered to by an old man-servant who, if rumour speaks the truth, was almost as dissolute as his master."

"A sad story," said Mr. Yorke. "I read something of it in the paper a day or two ago. The estate he left was not large."

"It was not," said Lord Louis. "A matter of a few hundreds, the house in which he died, and some furniture which went to the man-servant Griffe. The remainder of the family treasures, with the exception of this portrait, a crate or two of books, and a very perfect Nant Garw dessert service which came to me, had been sold to gratify his unconquerable thirst."

"If you have no objection," ventured Mr. Yorke, "it would be interesting to remove the picture from its frame. We should then be able to judge whether or no it has been tampered with."

The task was easily accomplished. It was then clearly evident that Lord Louis' surmise was correct. The painted surface of the canvas did not leave off with the front arras of the stretcher, as is usual, but ran right round to the back. Here, however, the surface was so coated with dirt that all detail had entirely vanished.

The tacks which held the canvas to the stretcher were old and rusty, and some time elapsed before they were extracted and the two experts were able to commence cleaning the ingrained filth from the surface.

Lord Louis had been working assiduously upon the right-hand side of the canvas when, suddenly, he remarked:—

"This is very odd! I don't know what you make of it, but I should describe that as a man's hand."

Mr. Yorke directed his gaze to the part indicated.

"You are right," he exclaimed; "it is a man's hand. But why should it be there?"

Lord Louis rubbed his chin.

"It occurs to me," he said, "that this portrait is a section of a larger group." Mr. Yorke nodded his head, and Lord Louis continued, "Everything points to that conclusion. Sir Joshua Reynolds would never have been guilty of such a bad composition. Evidently there was a male figure, probably

that of my very great uncle, standing behind the sofa on the right-hand side."

Mr. Russell Yorke was swift to endorse Lord Louis' hypothesis.

After much energy with a raw potato another discovery rewarded their labours. At a spot where the knees of the late Lady Anne Sefton were cut by the edge of the canvas rested two small hands clasped together. When the picture was cut these hands had been severed an inch or two above the wrists.

"Our inquiry moves quickly," said Lord Louis Lewis, with suppressed excitement. "Beyond all doubt this group was composed of three figures. Lord and Lady Sefton and their infant son."

Mr. Yorke was quite agitated.

"What diabolical intention induced anyone to destroy so beautiful a work?" he queried. "If this picture had been whole it would have been almost priceless."

Lord Louis straightened his back.

"Mr. Yorke," he said, "I shall not rest until I have solved the mystery and regained the missing portions of this work. In saying so I do not speak lightly. And now let us take a glass of wine together and drink success to the enterprise."

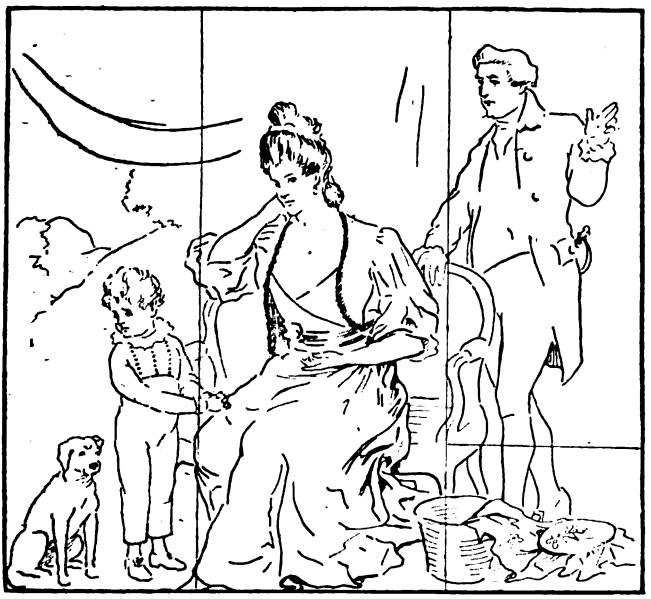
Two mornings later Mr. Russell Yorke received a wire from Lord Louis requesting his immediate presence at Bruton House, the latter's abode.

On arrival he was shown into a small breakfast-room, where Lord Louis was discussing a pot of coffee, a rack of dry toast, and a dish of hot-house peaches. Propped up against a silver rose-bowl was an old calf-bound book of MSS. engaging his attention while he broke his fast.

"I am delighted you were able to come," said Lord Louis. "Will you join me in a cup of coffee?"

Receiving a courteous negative he proceeded to explain his reasons for sending the wire.

"In examining the crate of books, which I mentioned as having come from my unhappy cousin, I made this discovery." He indicated the volume before him. "It is no less than a diary from the hand of Lady Anne Sefton, whose portrait was occupying our attention the day before yesterday. Pray listen to this passage," and he turned over several pages of the MSS. "Here we are. 'The portrait group of John, myself, and little Philip proceeds vastly well. Sir Joshua says it bids fair to out-rival all his other works. A most pleasant man, Sir Joshua, and dexterous with his brush beyond belief. His only regret is that he cannot induce John to remain still. Sitting for his portrait causes John to display greater choler than heretofore. I upbraided him roundly this morning for want of sobriety. He had partaken so freely, even at the early hour of eleven of the clock, as to be unable to stand, and did rock so perilously at the back of the sofa as to cause little Philip to cry of fright and Sir Joshua to lay aside his brushes and declare it availed nothing to proceed.'"



A ROUGH SKETCH IN OUTLINE OF THE FIGURES IN THE REYNOLDS GROUP, SHOWING HOW THE PICTURE WAS DIVIDED.

Lord Louis turned over a couple of pages.

"If you will look here," he said, "you will see that Lady Sefton made a rough sketch in outline of the arrangement of the figures. There! She herself, as we rightly surmised, was the central subject. Her husband is supporting himself at the back of the couch, a wise precaution, I have no doubt. At his feet is a work-basket containing an embroidery frame. On our left we have the son, Philip, beside whom a mongrel dog is seated. For an amateur the drawing is not without merit."

"A most valuable record," observed Mr. Yorke.

"True," Lord Louis acquiesced. "We now pass over a period of two years. Oh, by the way," he interpolated, whilst seeking the later entry, "she mentions the dimensions of the portrait as being six foot six by eight feet. Now, then. This explains how the picture came to be divided—the reason, as you will learn, being domestic, and of a painful character."

"I am all attention," said Mr. Yorke, resting his elbows on the table. Lord Louis began to read:—

"'The differences between myself and John have reached the final stage. I have decided that I cannot continue to dwell with him beneath the same roof.' An interval of four days, then this: 'John is much rejoiced by my determination. It is settled that I remain here, whilst he goes to London.'" Lord Louis turned over three or four pages. "Listen to this," he said. "'A great trouble has arisen over the division of our effects. John insists that the Reynolds group belongs to him, for all that he borrowed the money from my private purse wherewith to pay for it. . . . We have come to a decision at last, but I fear a sorry one, and tremble as to what Sir Joshua would say should news come to his ears. John's figure is to be cut from the group.'"

Mr. Yorke clasped his hands in pious horror and Lord Louis nodded sympathetically.

"There is a passage here explaining how this was done," he said. "It appears that Lord John was much incensed to find Lady Anne's work-basket at his feet, and accordingly cut off the lower part of the canvas upon which this was painted, thereby transforming his portrait into a three-quarter length. This study in still life, which, I ascertain from the diary, measured twenty-four inches by thirty, was retained by her ladyship."

"Is there no mention of why the child was severed from the group?" demanded Mr. Yorke.

Lord Louis picked up the diary, and read the ensuing passage:—

"'Many anxieties have I been caused as to who should have the custody of little Philip. Although John bears the child naught but ill-will he intends to take him from me. Rather than lose the dear infant I put it to John that he should have the portrait of the child while I retained the little one himself. I did argue that a painted picture would be less disposed to cast John into a frenzy than its living presentment. To this point John conceded, and he set about, therewith, to the further despoiling of Sir Joshua's masterpiece.'"

Lord Louis moistened his finger and turned over three pages.

"This is the last entry which concerns our investigation," he remarked. '. . . . John has gone and Philip and myself were vastly joyed to see the last of him. I pray, most devoutly, that never again shall I be burthened by the sight of him. He carried away his own and Philip's portrait and what little wine the cellars contained. The portrait of myself has been framed, but presents a sorry appearance, being over narrow for its length and top-heavy withal. I have also found a frame for the painting of my work-basket and embroidery tambour, but that, too, looks indifferent well with John's ankles and feet in the background.'"

"An artistic tragedy," murmured Mr. Yorke.

"And a domestic one," added Lord Louis. "It should, however, assist us greatly in prosecuting our search. We know, now, that there are three sections of the portrait to be found instead of two. A call upon my cousin's man-servant might not come amiss. He is still dwelling in his late master's house, the lease having been made over to him for his lifetime. In the meanwhile I have decided to insert this advertisement in all the leading journals." And he handed his friend a sheet of note-paper bearing the words:—

"Lord Louis Lewis of Bruton House, Clifton, would be glad to purchase the following works of art: The portrait of a gentleman, minus his right hand, and both feet below the knees. Dimensions 54 by 24 ins. Period: Middle of eighteenth century. The portrait of a small boy and mongrel dog. Both hands must be missing and the background to consist of red drapery and a conventional landscape. Dimensions 78 by 35 ins. Period: the same."

Mr. Yorke nodded his approval and returned the paper slip with the words, "You have omitted to mention the work-basket."

"Purposely," replied his host. "If it should still be in the possession of my late cousin's servant it is wiser not to arouse his suspicions until I have made a personal call."

"Quite," endorsed Mr. Yorke, then adding, "Is this person a resident of Bristol?"

"No. He is living in Wells," replied Lord Louis, "at a house called 'La Peruse.'"

Lord Louis' advertisement appeared on the following morning. One of the persons upon whom it created the greatest effect was Mr.

Eden Kineagie. It was this gentleman's boast that he knew more about pictures than anyone else.

Mr. Kineagie was an odd, round-shouldered little man of indeterminate age.

The announcement attracted his attention at breakfast on the second day of its insertion.

Forgetful of everything else he sprang to his feet and hurried out into the hall. Unlocking the door with a Yale key, he admitted himself to a large gallery, the walls of which were covered with priceless works of art. In the farthest corner was a narrow, three-quarter length of an eighteenth-century gentleman, whose right hand passed beyond the margin of the frame.

Before this work Mr. Kineagie halted.

"Must be—must be," he muttered. "Now I *shall* find out who you are."

A couple of minutes later Mr. Kineagie was hurrying to Paddington Station.

By an odd chance Mr. Russell Yorke received a note, by the same post, asking him to run over to Wells that day and take lunch with his brother-in-law.

He arrived at that town before twelve. On presenting his card at the hotel he discovered that his brother-in-law was out, and not expected to return till one o'clock.

The day being fine, Mr. Yorke decided to follow his example, and allowed his footsteps to lead him where they willed.

After walking for some ten minutes Mr. Yorke was attracted by a green bench, in the shade of a chestnut tree. Here he sat down and lit a pipe. Immediately facing him was a little, old Georgian house, upon the gate of which were written the words "La Peruse." Something in the name struck a familiar note in Mr. Yorke's mind. Then he recalled that "La Peruse" was the house in which Lord Louis' cousin had breathed his last. Mr. Yorke rose to his feet.

Without considering what he intended to say, he crossed and rang the bell and presently the front door was opened. The sight which greeted Mr. Yorke was not a pleasant one. His best friend could not have described Mr. Griffe as anything but a plain man.

"Well?" grunted Mr. Griffe.

"I am a friend of Lord Louis Lewis's, who was a legatee under your late master's will," said Mr. Yorke.

"Well," he repeated.

"Lord Louis is anxious to find out the whereabouts of a certain picture, which he believes may have been in the possession of your master at the time of his death."

"The picture was sent to him," replied Griffe, warily.

"I am not referring to the portrait of the lady," went on Mr. Yorke, "but to a smaller canvas of lesser importance, consisting merely of a work-basket and an embroidery frame."

Griffe's eyes narrowed. "I know nothing about it," he said.

"Then I will trespass no further upon your time," Mr. Yorke replied, coldly.

"Half a minute," grunted Mr. Griffe, rather hesitatingly. "Is this picture valuable, eh?"

"That is not the point," retorted Mr. Yorke. "All your late employer's pictures are now Lord Louis' property, and if it is still here and you have failed to send it, you are committing a breach of the law."

"Well, it isn't here, so I'm not," snapped Griffe, and slammed the door.

Mr. Yorke turned away not a little ruffled by the rudeness of his reception. Passing the garden gate he noticed there was a "To Let" board in front of the house.

At half-past three that afternoon Lord Louis Lewis had a caller. Badger, the butler, entered with a card on a tray, bearing the name "Mr. Eden Kineagie."

"Show the gentleman in," said Lord Louis.

Ignoring all formalities Mr. Kineagie went straight at the object of his call.

"Where's the picture?" he rapped out. "Let's have a look at it."

Lord Louis raised his eyebrows, an amused smile playing over his features.

"I perceive," he said, "that I have not cast my nets in vain. You are here, Mr. Kineagie, in answer to my advertisement?"

"I am here because of it," came the reply. "If you have got the picture, let's have a look. My time's valuable."

"Follow me, then"; and Lord Louis led the way into an inner apartment, where the Reynolds, temporarily replaced in its frame, was hanging. "There!" he indicated.

Mr. Kineagie examined it minutely. He crossed to the window and threw back the curtains, thus admitting more light, then clambered up on a chair and glued his nose to the canvas. During the whole of this period no word was spoken. Finally he descended and turned his little, bead-like eyes upon Lord Louis.

"I'll buy," he said. "How much?"

"I fear," remarked Lord Louis, "that you cannot have read my advertisement aright. I wish to purchase, not to sell."

"Give you four thousand for her," Kineagie

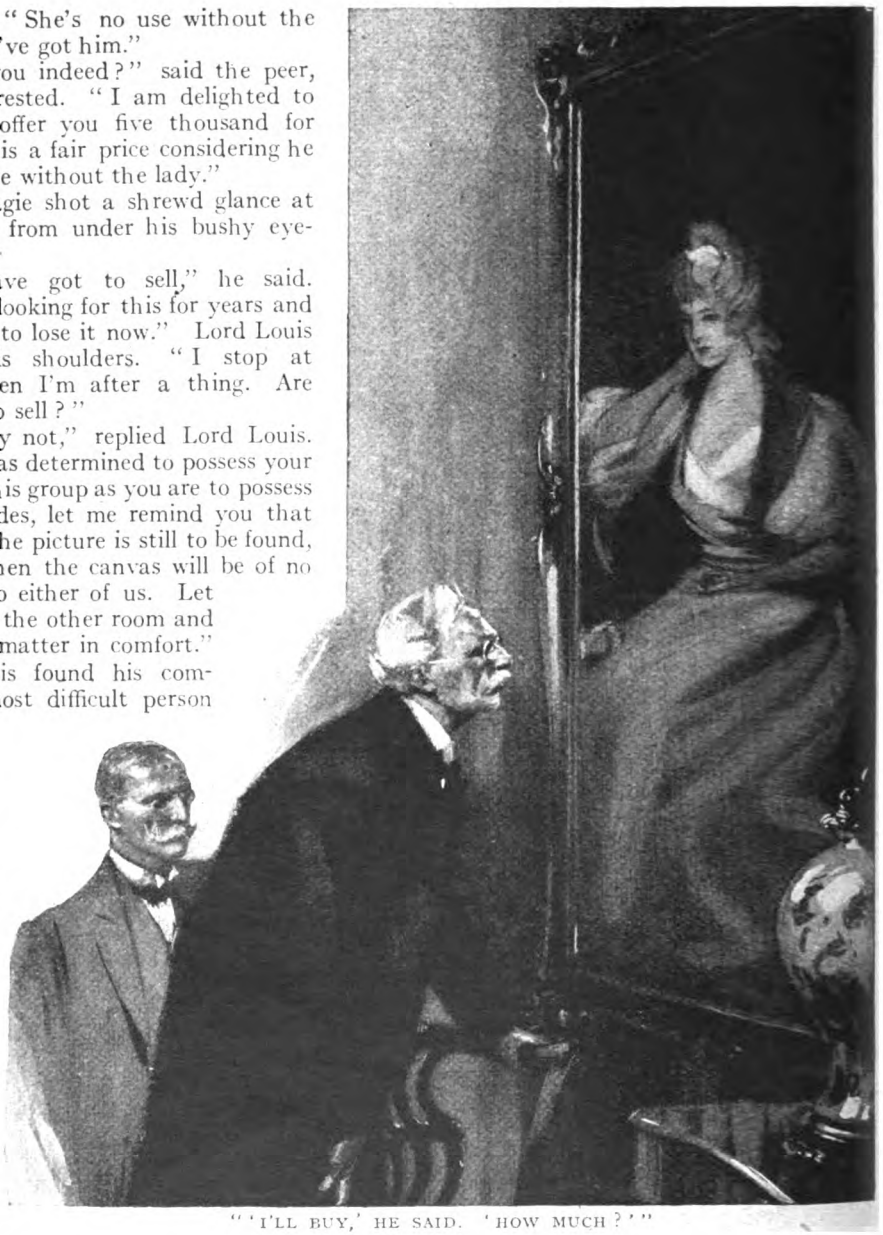
exclaimed. "She's no use without the man—and I've got him."

"Have you indeed?" said the peer, greatly interested. "I am delighted to hear it. I offer you five thousand for him, which is a fair price considering he is of no value without the lady."

Mr. Kineagie shot a shrewd glance at Lord Louis from under his bushy eyebrows.

"You have got to sell," he said. "I've been looking for this for years and don't mean to lose it now." Lord Louis shrugged his shoulders. "I stop at nothing when I'm after a thing. Are you going to sell?"

"Certainly not," replied Lord Louis. "I am just as determined to possess your portion of this group as you are to possess mine. Besides, let me remind you that the rest of the picture is still to be found, and until then the canvas will be of no real value to either of us. Let us return to the other room and discuss the matter in comfort."



"'I'LL BUY,' HE SAID. 'HOW MUCH?'"

Lord Louis found his companion a most difficult person to deal with. He resolutely declined to agree to any proposal, and it was not until Lord Louis had the inspiration to make an appeal to his sporting instincts that an understanding was arrived at. It was decided that whoever secured the part of the picture representing the child should be able to purchase from the other at a fixed sum of four thousand pounds the remaining portion or portions of the canvas. In order that there should be no unfairness or special advantage Lord Louis showed Kineagie certain passages in the diary and also the little pencil sketch Lady Anne had made. The only thing that he refused to confide was where the portrait of Lady Anne had come from, as he did not wish Mr. Kineagie to steal a march upon him with the man Griffe. Mr. Kineagie in return told how he had acquired the portrait of Lord Sefton, having bought it at the Caledonian Market for a few shillings.

Eventually Lord Louis rose to end the interview.

"Well, Mr. Kineagie," he said, "it will be interesting to see who wins the prize. I trust I may be forgiven for hoping it will not be you."

"Hum!" mumbled Kineagie. "You said these things, the diary and the painting, came from a cousin of yours. What did you say his name was?"

"I carefully omitted all mention of either his name or his address," replied Lord Louis, with a smile. "The picture arrived from another city in company with that case of books which I have not yet unpacked."

"Hum!" repeated Kineagie, and followed by Lord Louis walked across the hall towards the open front door, arriving there at the same moment that Mr. Russell Yorke turned in at the drive gates.

"Halloa, where did I put my hat?" he snapped.

"You left it in the smoking-room, I fancy," said Lord Louis.

"So I did," he said, and quickly returned to that apartment, leaving Lord Louis to welcome the new arrival.

Mr. Kineagie's actions in the smoking-room were brief but dishonourable. He put on his hat, then crossing to the table slipped Lady Anne's diary under his overcoat. His eye was attracted towards the wooden case containing the books. He stepped towards it and looked at the label, on which was written Lord Louis' address and that of the sender. This he whipped off and dropped into his pocket, then went straight from the room.

He acknowledged Lord Louis' farewell salute with a curt nod and made off from the premises at a brisk pace.

"Wasn't that Eden Kineagie?" demanded Mr. Yorke.

"The same," replied Lord Louis, and, leading his guest to the smoke-room, recounted all that had taken place.

Thereupon Mr. Yorke took up the tale of his adventure with Griffe.

At the conclusion Lord Louis puckered his brow. "It is good of you to have taken so much trouble," he said, "but I wonder if we have been wise to arouse this man's suspicions."

"He undoubtedly knew nothing of the picture," replied Mr. Yorke.

"Good! You said the house was to let. I will get an order to view. This will ensure my gaining admittance——" He stopped abruptly, his eyes upon the centre table. "Strange," he said. "I could have sworn I left Lady Anne's diary on that table. I took it from that case to show to Mr. Kineagie."

"You returned it unconsciously, perhaps," suggested Mr. Yorke.

Lord Louis walked over to the case to make sure.

"No, it is not here," he said, then added, "Dear me!" The last remark being inspired by the sight of the four tintacks which had recently held the label to the box.

"What's the matter?" demanded Mr. Yorke.

Lord Louis spoke very incisively. "Our friend Kineagie," he said, "does not intend the grass to grow beneath his feet. In returning to this room to fetch his hat he not only took Lady Anne's diary, which will in no way aid his search, but also tore off the label from this box—which I now remember bore my late cousin's address as well as my own. He will know now where the work-basket canvas may possibly be found." Mr. Yorke whistled. "I think," continued Lord Louis, picking up a time-table, "I should be wise to go to Wells immediately. Be so good as to look me up a train while I send a wire."

Mr. Yorke took the time-table and Lord Louis addressed the following telegram to Mr. Kineagie, whose card he had retained.

"Eden Kineagie. Staintons, Fellow's Road, Hampstead, N.W. To remind you of the eighth commandment which escaped your memory in my smoking-room this afternoon. —LEWIS."

"There," he said, handing the form to Mr. Yorke. "I do not imagine that he will have returned home, but I should like him to know when he does that his theft has not passed unnoticed. What are the trains?"

"The last to-day left an hour ago. There is one in the morning at nine forty-five."

"I will catch that," said Lord Louis. "It is possible you might be able to do me a service at the station. Let us breakfast together here at eight-thirty."

"Delighted," said Mr. Yorke, and bade farewell to his host.

That night, at about two a.m., Lord Louis' house was broken into. The catch of a downstairs window was forced and the sash raised, admitting an individual of inconspicuous appearance. This person's movements were not in accord with those of the average burglar. He carried neither a bag nor a weapon, but only an electric torch, the light from which he directed exclusively at the walls. He did not devote much time to anything until the light revealed the Reynolds portrait. Here, following the example of Eden Kineagie, he mounted a chair and exposed the canvas to a searching examination. He paid particular attention to the left side of the picture. This done a sigh of satisfaction escaped his lips. He then rummaged about on the

writing-table until he found a specimen of Lord Louis' signature. This he carefully stowed away in his breast-pocket. After which he crossed the hall, opened the front door, and closed it silently behind him. Neither then nor afterwards was anybody aware that this visit had been made.

At breakfast the following morning Lord Louis made certain arrangements with Mr. Yorke for the latter to carry out should the necessity arise. At nine o'clock the car conveyed them to the station.

"You understand what to do should Kineagie appear?" Lord Louis questioned.

"Quite," returned the other.

"There is no other train until eleven-twenty. We must prevent him from travelling by this one at all costs."

"Rely on me," replied Mr. Yorke, and turned into the platform waiting-room. Lord Louis entered the first compartment after the engine. A short while later people began to take their seats, but it was not until about two minutes before the scheduled time for starting that Mr. Yorke's vigil was rewarded and he espied the bunched-up figure of Eden Kineagie hurrying down the platform. Mr. Yorke carefully noted the carriage he entered and then transferred his attentions to the guard. He waited until the guard was raising his green flag before leaping from concealment. Straight as a die he ran to Mr. Kineagie's carriage and, flinging open the door, cried, breathlessly:—

"Mr. Kineagie!"

"Well?" retorted that individual, as the train began to move from the platform.

"Do you want the picture of the child?" he gasped.

"Yes. Get in," cried Kineagie.

"No. You get out," he insisted. "If you don't you'll lose it."

Mr. Kineagie hesitated and a porter shouted, "Stand away, there."

"Too late!" cried Mr. Yorke, and began to close the door.

"Too late be hanged," yelled Kineagie, and sprang out upon the platform. "Now, then, what's it all about?"

But Mr. Yorke was so put to it for breath as to be unable to make any reply until the train was well out of reach. Then his answer was something in the nature of a surprise.

"I fear," he said, "I am the cause of your losing the train."

"That don't matter," returned the other. "If you have got the picture."

"But I haven't," Mr. Yorke blandly replied. "I merely asked if you wanted it. Ah, see! There is our friend Lord Louis waving from his carriage window."

There followed a period in which Mr. Eden Kineagie spoke his mind with alarming frankness, and was warned by a station official that unless he modified his language unpleasant consequences would inevitably ensue.

Lord Louis alighted at Wells, and in less than a quarter of an hour stood at the door of his late cousin's abode, armed with an order to view, bearing his incognito of Mr. Clifton.

Griffe, who admitted his lordship, expressed his readiness to show Mr. Clifton over the house, and hoped it might suit him. Lord Louis made a careful survey of the walls, but beyond a few oleographs and valueless engravings his search was unrewarded.

They had now arrived at the top floor, and still nothing had been revealed.

"There are just a couple of maids' rooms here," said Griffe, "and this is a cupboard."

"Ah!" said Lord Louis, brightening up. "Cupboards interest me very much. But the door, I perceive, is locked."

"Yes," replied Griffe, with a trace of hesitation. "And somehow I have mislaid the key."

Very reluctantly Lord Louis allowed himself to be drawn away from the closed cupboard and led below.

Lord Louis inspected the morning-room, which evidenced signs of its owner's habits. Before going he turned his attention to the walls. It was evident the room had not been papered for many years, as all trace of the pattern had long since vanished in a uniform, yellowy brown. Suddenly he experienced a shock. Immediately over the mantelpiece was an oblong patch in which the original design of the wall-paper was clearly visible. There could be no doubt that a picture had been recently removed which must have been suspended there for a very long time. Although Lord Louis could only guess at the size of this space he realized that it could not differ greatly from the dimensions of the Reynolds canvas depicting Lady Anne's work-basket.

Lord Louis pointed an accusing finger at Griffe.

"Griffe," he said, taking a leap in the dark, "you are a scoundrel."

"What do you mean?" cried Griffe.

"You are a scoundrel," repeated Lord Louis. "I give you two minutes to bring me the picture which hung there, or face the consequences."

Griffe fell back a pace. "Don't know what you're talking about," he stammered.

"You will gain nothing by prevarication," continued Lord Louis. "The picture is in the cupboard upstairs. Fetch it at once."

"However did you know that!" exclaimed Griffe, hopelessly committing himself.

"I am Lord Louis Lewis," came the reply, in accents which would have graced a melodrama, "and I know everything."

"I didn't know that it was worth anything," whined Griffe. "I wouldn't believe my old master when he said it was a good 'un."

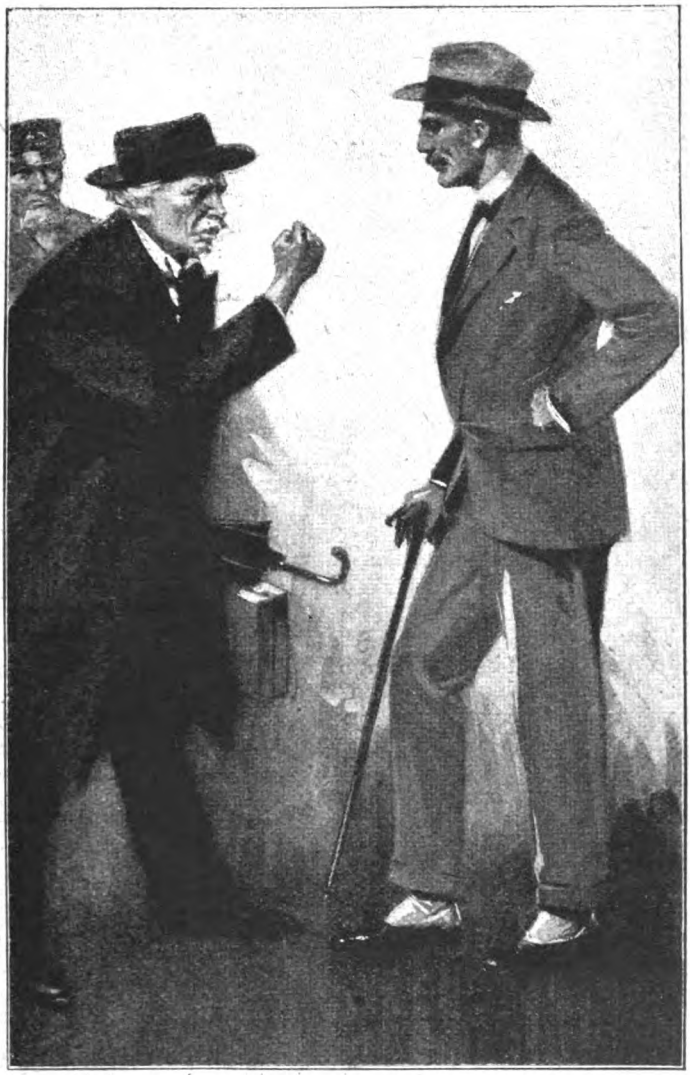
Lord Louis relaxed a trifle. "Produce it now," he said, "and I will not be hard on you. But fail to do so——"

Griffe did not wait for the end of the sentence, but, muttering "I'll get it," slunk from the room.

As the door closed Lord Louis' face broke into a smile.

"One up to me, Mr. Kineagie," he murmured to himself.

Two minutes later Lady Anne's work-basket and tambour-frame, as rendered by the hand of Sir Joshua Reynolds, left the precincts of "La Peruse" under the sheltering arm of Lord Louis Lewis.



"MR. EDEN KINEAGIE SPOKE HIS MIND WITH ALARMING FRANKNESS, AND WAS WARNED BY A STATION OFFICIAL THAT UNLESS HE MODIFIED HIS LANGUAGE UNPLEASANT CONSEQUENCES WOULD INEVITABLY ENSUE."

Mr. Griffe had another caller during the day in the person of Mr. Eden Kineagie, who, following his usual custom, lost no time in beating about the bush.

"If you've got a picture here of a work-basket and a bit of embroidery, I'll give you a couple of hundred for it," he said.

Whereupon Mr. Griffe reviled Mr. Kineagie for not coming the day before, and calling Heaven to witness that his luck was out, slammed the door in that gentleman's face.

Lord Louis took advantage of his presence in Wells to call upon an acquaintance, and did not return to his native town until after dark.

There were two gates to Bruton House, and a short drive with a circular clump of bushes in the centre. Lord Louis entered by the first gate, and had taken a few paces down the drive when, in the light of the arc lamp, he became aware of a covered motor-van drawn up at his front door.

The side of the van was decorated with the words "J. Dorney: Pictures Restored and Cleaned," rendered in very new white paint. Some inner sense warned him that

all was not as it should be, so, instead of proceeding, he halted under the shadow of the bushes and awaited events.

In the doorway appeared Badger, his butler, and a man, and between them they bore the portrait of Lady Anne Sefton. Together they raised it into the van, the man covering it over with a piece of sacking.

Lord Louis was dumbfounded, and his first thought was to spring forward and rescue his property. Then a subtler possibility stole into his brain, and without pausing to consider the wisdom of the action, he thrust the canvas he was carrying into the bushes and skirted round to the other side of the clump.

The man engaged the low gear, and the motor moved forward. Lord Louis waited until it had passed him, then, without attracting attention, sprang lightly upon the tail-board. To his great relief he found that the inside of the vehicle was completely screened from the driver by the hood. He drew up his legs and settled down for the journey. They passed through the gates, turned sharp to the left, and bowled away briskly into the night. Lord Louis fully expected that the van would draw up in some remote part of the town, but herein he was mistaken. The driver made for the London Road, and then increased his speed. In twenty minutes' time the City of Bristol had become a mere twinkle of light in the distance, and they were rattling along in the open country.

"Well," said Lord Louis to himself, "it looks as if I am in for a tour."

Mile after mile passed. He took out his luminous-dialed watch and examined the time. It was nearly ten o'clock. A few minutes later he had slipped quietly into unconsciousness. He awoke suddenly as the vehicle drew up with a start. Cursing himself for his stupidity, he drew back to the extreme end of the van and covered himself over with the sacking. He heard the driver descend and rap twice at a door, which was immediately opened and a voice, evidently that of an old man, saying:—

"Have you got it?"

"Sure," came the reply. "Give us a hand and we'll take it in."

"No—no," said the other. "Let it bide there. I've a fancy that we'll move the best stuff to-night to the other end. People are a bit too neighbourly hereabouts for my liking."

"Right you are," said Lord Louis' driver, "but give us a bit of supper first."

"It's all set out in the front room," the older man returned. "Come in, and don't be long about it."

When the door had closed behind them Lord Louis crept out from his hiding-place. Having come so far, he was determined to go through with the adventure to the end. Moreover, he had a curious conviction that the house contained some mystery in which he was concerned. Remembering the words that the supper was laid in the front room, he wisely considered that the back of the house would be the safest point to investigate. There was a room at the rear wherein a light was visible shining through the lowered blind. He cautiously approached and peeped through a crevice between the sash and the blind. The room itself was practically denuded of furniture, but leaning against the walls were a number of canvases covered over with white cloths. One of these was larger than the rest, and Lord Louis' heart almost stopped beating when he saw the shape of it. It was very narrow for its length.

"I'm going to look at that picture if I die in the attempt," he said. The wash-house boasted a window about fourteen inches square. By the greatest good fortune the catch was unfastened. Lord Louis mentally weighed the chances of squeezing through this aperture, then taking his courage in both hands, he started to do the deed head first.

The task was not an easy one, and when eventually he landed face downwards on the floor it was not without having caused considerable damage to both his clothes and feelings. However, these considerations did not oppress him, and he hastened, on tip-toe, to investigate the mystery of the back room.

The door there was ajar, relieving him of the danger of making a row in opening it. Going straight to the tall canvas, he removed its wrappings, and there, before him, was the figure of little Philip Sefton, leaning vainly forward as though seeking the mother from whose side he had been cleft.

The sound of voices in the adjoining room aroused him to the necessity for formulating some plan of action.

He stepped out into the hall to listen to what was passing there.

"If we could get the rest of the picture then we could talk," came the voice of the older man. "It's twenty-five years ago since I lifted that child's portrait, and much good it's been to me. You are sure the woman's been cut down too?"

"You can see for yourself if you slip out and look," replied the driver of the motor.

"Bad luck," said the other. "We're not much better off with the two than we were with the one."

"You're never satisfied. You'd grumble if the gates of heaven was dropped into your lap."

At this point Lord Louis returned to the other room. It was clear that he had only two persons to deal with, and he rubbed his chin as he considered what would be the best method of attack.

Then it was that Fate played a most unexpected move. In crossing the room Lord Louis brought his head into violent collision with the gas chandelier suspended from the ceiling. The result was that two of the globes fell to the floor with the sound of an exploding bomb.

"That's done it," said Lord Louis to himself.

From the other room came a cry of "What's that—police?"

Instantly an idea flashed into the peer's brain, and, raising his voice, he shouted, in a constabulary manner :—

"Edwards, you clumsy fool! Get round to the front door, Parsons. Quick and lively."

"BETWEEN THEM THEY BORE THE PORTRAIT OF LADY ANNE SEFTON."

There was the sound of the window being hurriedly lifted in the front room. "This way," cried the voice of the younger man. "Start up the car," yelled the older. "No petrol. We must run for it." Then the sound of feet running hard on the pavement outside. Lord Louis arrived at the front door in time to see two shadowy forms disappear round the corner.

"Well," he said, "that was an easy victory," and returned to the house. He then sat down to a critical survey of the position of affairs. "Our friends are clearly men of dishonest

habit," he argued. "I doubt if they have any proprietary right to the works of art which adorn the house. Shall I warn the police or shall I not?" The upshot of his reasoning was that he would leave the police to make the discovery for themselves. He then returned to the back room and, picking up the picture of little Philip, brought it out and placed it beside his mother in the van. The next move was to replenish the tank. This he did with two tins of petrol he found at the back. He then returned to the house and extinguished all the lights, closed the windows and front door, and, climbing into the driver's seat, drove carefully away.

Lord Louis and the borrowed van arrived at Bruton House in the grey of dawn. Badger, who had sat up the whole night anxiously awaiting his master's return, greeted him with a combination of delight and astonishment. Lord Louis was too tired to give any explanation of his doings, but together they carried the precious canvases into the study. He also rescued the painting of the work-basket from the bushes in the drive. He then wrote a wire to Mr. Kineagie asking him to call at his earliest convenience to inspect the picture of the child, and after instructing Badger to have it dispatched as soon as the office was opened, retired to bed.

He came down to breakfast at twelve o'clock to find that Mr. Russell Yorke was awaiting him in high excitement at the news which Badger had imparted.

In the late afternoon Mr. Eden Kineagie put in an appearance. Between them Mr. Yorke and Lord Louis had taken the canvases from their stretchers and laid them in correct relation to each other on the library floor. Thither they conducted Mr. Kineagie. Mr. Yorke fully expected some display of violence, but in this he was at fault. For a long time Kineagie said nothing at all, and then in a voice which might well have come from a lover he remarked:—

"Oh, you beautiful—beautiful thing." Then, turning to Lord Louis, "Tell your man to bring in the case from my cab," and a few moments later the portrait of Lord Sefton was standing next to that of his wife, with a greater tranquillity than he had ever displayed during his mortal career.

Lord Louis was much affected by Mr. Kineagie's sporting acceptance of Fate's handiwork, and remarked upon it in most cordial terms.

"Pooh," replied that gentleman. "A bargain's a bargain. Yours was amateur's luck. Will you let me have the picture put together for you? I know the only man who could do it. P'r'aps you don't trust me, though?"

"I trust you implicitly," responded Lord Louis, and walked over to his writing table. When he returned he handed the little man a cheque for four thousand pounds.

To his great surprise Mr. Kineagie tore it up in small pieces.

"I collect pictures," he said, "not cheques." He rummaged in his pocket and flung Lady Anne's diary on the table, and with a muttered "good-bye" banged out of the house.

As a salve to his conscience Lord Louis put an advertisement in the papers to the effect that he would be pleased to reward the owner of the picture of a child without any hands, but oddly enough he received no reply. He was not a little embarrassed by the continued presence of the motor-van bearing the name of "J. Dorney: Pictures Restored and Cleaned," but as no one came forward to claim the vehicle he used it for the conveyance of luggage to and from the station, and sent its equivalent value to a society for carrying the Gospel into the heart of the Congo.

People who have been privileged to see the Reynolds Group declare it to be the finest example of that master's work in the kingdom, and even experts have found it hard to believe that for over a hundred years it existed as four isolated sections of the now perfect whole.

Sherlock Holmes and the German Spy

NEXT MONTH.

My Most Exciting Experiences in Various Wars.

By E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT,
The Famous War Correspondent.

YOU ask me to write some of the most exciting experiences during my career as a War Correspondent. This is not very easy, as I have taken part in thirteen campaigns extending over a period of nearly twenty years, commencing with the Greco-Turkish War, when I was only sixteen years of age.

I imagine that going into action for the first time must be the most exciting moment in anyone's life. In nine cases out of ten, the individual who is about to go under fire is not so much frightened at the prospect of death or wounds as haunted by the uncertainty of what his own conduct is going to be. Will his nerves stand the strain, or will he disgrace himself before his comrades? But just as soon as the first bullets have whistled by, the tyro gains confidence, for, although he may be scared to death, he knows he can control himself. This war has proved that courage is the most common of all virtues. We all knew how our little Expeditionary Force, which left these shores in August, 1914, would acquit itself in the face of the enemy, but no one could foretell how our new armies, drawn from all classes of society without military instincts or traditions, would face the dread ordeal. But they have proved themselves just as good fighters as our old regular troops, and if you read the papers day by day it is one long record of the superlative gallantry of English, Scotch, Irish, and Colonial Divisions. In fact, the same may be said of the soldiers of every nation engaged in the war. None of the combatants can claim a monopoly of courage.

I well remember going into action for the first time in the Greco-Turkish War, and my ignominious exit from the fight. The Turks were attacking the Greek positions at Valestinos with an inadequate force, as they expected them to run away at the first advance. But on this occasion the Greek army decided to make a stand. I went forward through a wood with the Turkish infantry, and we steadily drove back the Greek skirmishers to their trenches on the hills behind. Both sides were armed with old-fashioned Martinis and Gras rifles, which fired black powder and gave forth dense quantities of smoke. The big lead bullets hummed through the air like angry bees, and the noise in the wood was perfectly deafening. I was horribly frightened, but kept up my spirits by continually discharging a small Winchester repeater with which I was armed, aiming at the trees in front. Suddenly I came upon a dead Turkish soldier, with his forehead blown right away by a bullet, and lying in a pool of blood. He was the first dead person I had ever seen, and the sight filled me with inexpressible horror. I stood and gazed at him in a kind of stupor for some minutes. The firing-line had passed out of sight, and I was alone. No more fighting for me that day. I seized my rifle and crept from the battlefield, being chased in my disordered imagination by a thousand frightful spectres. For days I could not forget the spectacle of that dead man with his head blown away.

However, it is surprising how soon one does become hardened to the most dreadful sights in war. On the other hand, I have hardly ever met anyone who really became accustomed to being under fire. In fact, the more you see of war, the less you like it. It is the greatest mistake to suppose that a veteran is a better fighter than a recruit. Especially is this true in modern warfare, where the strain on the nervous system is unprecedented, and the more men go into action, the quicker they lose their fighting efficiency. I have occasionally come across types who are apparently without nerves, and who actually seem to enjoy going into the most dangerous places for the sake of adventure. But they are few and far between. The really brave man is the one who is always terrified, but who yet conquers his weakness and keeps his head in all circumstances.

If the truth were known, it would probably be found that many rewards for valour have been won by men who in reality were so scared that they hardly knew what they were doing.

There were thrilling moments during the siege of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War, the first in which I acted as a war correspondent.

I shall never forget the assault of the Japanese on the Fort of Nirusan, one of the main defences of the Eastern sector during this general attack made on November 26th, 1904. The siege of Port Arthur was far and away the finest spectacle of war I have ever witnessed, as, owing to the peculiar configuration of the ground, you could see everything that passed at the closest possible range. I myself watched all these great attacks from trenches at a distance of three hundred yards, where glasses were not even required. On this occasion the Japanese had been told that they must take Port Arthur at all costs. They were nerved up to the highest possible pitch of enthusiasm because it was the Emperor's birthday, and General Nogi had told them they must make the Emperor a birthday present of the fortress. Through the morning, the Russian forts had been subjected to a terrific bombardment from over six hundred guns and howitzers of all calibres. Nirusan was the principal work to be assaulted. The Japanese had sapped their way right into the ditch, and now they had to climb the escarpment which was over forty feet high. They had tried to make a causeway by filling up the ditch with sandbags, but this reached only half-way to the top, and it was necessary to use scaling ladders. The excitement throughout the army was intense as the hour fixed for the attack drew near. Exactly to the minute the guns lengthened their fuses and the infantry rushed forward from the sap-heads, uttering tremendous shouts of "Banzi." The front ranks carried great bamboo scaling ladders and placed them in position. The bravest officers, sword in hand, then climbed to the top, followed by masses of men, so that you saw the scaling ladders black with figures like fly-papers in summer-time. The brave Siberian infantry holding Nirusan, warned by the lifting of the bombardment that the assault was due, left their bombproofs to meet the attack on the top of the escarpment. Then occurred one of the most extraordinary scenes I have ever witnessed in war. The Russians had huge forks on the end of long poles, and with these they pushed the ladders backwards, toppling the assaulters into the ditch beneath. Time and time again the Japanese rushed forward only to be hurled into the ditch, which was choked with hundreds of dead, wounded, and uninjured men. Those who were not hurt kept on making fresh attempts, and the Russians, to check the rush, poured quantities of oil on to the mass below and then set the lot on fire with hand grenades. Great clouds of black smoke obscured the scene, and from this inferno arose the terrible cries of hundreds of tormented men who were slowly burning to death. A horrible smell of burnt flesh was wafted back on the breeze.

The Japanese, in spite of their enormous losses, refused to break off the engagement, and time and time again hurled themselves to certain death. Finally, by sheer weight of numbers, they won the top of the escarpment, and held on there, but were unable to advance. In fact, they found their way blocked by barbed wire, and a terrible fire from the machine guns, from the concrete barrack at the back. Over and over again small parties rushed forward, only to be shot down. At five o'clock the final tragedy was enacted. The Russians, reinforced from the rear, made a counter-attack, and we witnessed a terrible fight with bayonets and clubbed rifles on the top of the escarpment. The combatants were so hopelessly intermingled that neither of them dared fire. The two lines struggled and swayed to and fro. The Japanese tried desperately to hold on, but were literally pushed off the fort into the ditch. Their whole line suddenly gave way and rolled down the escarpment into the fosse below, which was already choked with dead. At six o'clock the fight was over. Everywhere the assault had failed. Twenty-six thousand men fell on that fateful afternoon in trying to present their Emperor with a birthday gift of Port Arthur.

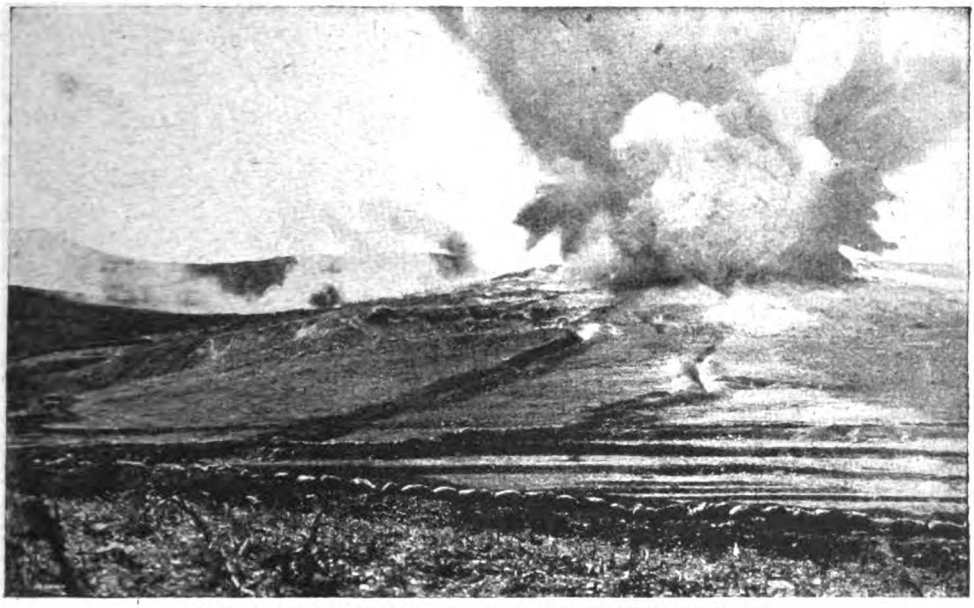
Then we settled down to siege operations, and the Japanese engineers proceeded to dig their way under the Russian forts and to place tons of explosives in position. A fight in the open is bad enough, but this wholesale slaughter of hundreds of men by mines always seems to me infinitely more horrible.

I shall never forget the destruction of the North Keikwansan Fort on December 18th, 1914. It was mid-winter, and the ground was frozen hard and covered with deep snow. Winter in Manchuria is no joke, and you hardly ventured out of doors unless it was absolutely essential. I lived in a wretched hut in a miserable Chinese village, and at nights slept on a brick stove with a fire made of maize stalks blazing underneath me. On the evening of December 17th I was sitting by my fire trying to keep warm, when there came a knock at the door, and a staff officer entered and handed me a letter, which read as follows:—

"General Baron Nogi presents his compliments, and wishes to say that if it would interest you to see the Keikwansan Fort blown up, he will have the honour to blow it up at 10 a.m. to-morrow morning, and would advise you to be at your place at that time."

This was the laconic announcement of an action which would mean the destruction of hundreds of brave men sleeping in total ignorance of their impending fate in the doomed fort. But such is war.

On the following morning I was up early, and made my way to my chosen observation post. The day was beautifully fine and clear. The news seemed to have become known, and thousands of Japanese had come from the lines of communication to have a look at this spectacular event. The sap-heads leading to the fort were bright with glistening bayonets, showing where the assaulting parties were gathered to spring on the doomed position. The fort, covered with its white mantle, looked as if it would remain the same until the day of judgment, and that no power of man could injure it. That last half-hour between nine-thirty and ten was passed in breathless excitement. Hundreds took out their watches and counted the seconds pass. You wondered if the engineers would be punctual,



THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KEIKWANSAN FORT.

"PUNCTUAL TO THE SECOND THE TRAIN WAS FIRED, A DENSE CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE AT ONCE OBSCURED THE FORT, FOLLOWED BY A DULL HEAVY ROAR."

From a Photograph.

or if they would allow the wretches, so ignorant of their impending fate, an extra five minutes of life. You felt you would like to cry out and warn the garrison to get away in time. But there was no warning and no extra five minutes. Punctual to the second the train was fired, a dense cloud of black smoke at once obscured the fort, followed by a dull heavy roar. Two other explosions followed within a few seconds. High above the smoke you saw shapeless masses of masonry, great wooden beams, stones, rubbish, and human forms blown in all directions. When the smoke cleared a huge V-shaped cavity was disclosed in the escarpment.

Then there came a delay, for the Japanese infantry did not charge. No one knew why. The reason was this, as we learnt afterwards. The first explosion blew partly outwards into the sap-heads, and killed some fifty of the assaulting column. This delayed the attack, which had to be reorganized. Ten minutes later the whole brigade swept through the breach, uttering terrible shouts of "Banzi!" Five hundred of the garrison were killed outright by the explosion, and the remainder took shelter in the concrete barrack at the back. Here for twenty-four hours they held out before the last of them was bayoneted by the Mikado's infuriated soldiers. On the following day I visited the fort. It was a mere shambles.

I have had some very exciting times fighting in Morocco with the French and Spanish armies. In their native warfare there is none of the long-drawn-out horror of a great European conflict. The fighting is in the open, there are no trenches and few guns. It is quite dangerous enough for any ordinary person, but you do get a run for your money, and there is a certain appealing element of sport about it.

I was with the French Army under General Drude when they occupied Casablanca, which started the great Morocco embroglio, from which hour the present European War became inevitable. For some weeks, whilst awaiting reinforcements, we were besieged in the town by thousands of Moors. The latter are brave fighters, and the French have raised some splendid material from their new possessions. But at this time the Moor loved to fight on horseback and to fire from the saddle. This made his shooting indifferent, but added to the picturesqueness of the scene. I have seen thousands of them charge down on the town to within a few hundred yards of the French lines, and then wheel to the right and left, firing from the saddle as they dashed across our front. On these occasions they were a wonderful target for the French "seventy-fives," which played sad havoc in their white-robed ranks. So they abandoned these expensive tactics, and waited to cut off small detachments engaged in reconnaissance outside the town. I remember one very exciting afternoon's work. For some time the Moors had apparently disappeared from the neighbourhood of Casablanca, and a small force, consisting of two hundred men of the famous Foreign Legion and two guns, set out to make a reconnaissance, the whole detachment under Colonel Prevost, a friend of mine, who invited me to go with him. We marched some five miles without seeing the enemy, except for one or two small patrols, who immediately fled at our approach. Then having gone as far as was

considered prudent, we were about to return, when a sharp fire was opened from some bushes a few hundred yards away. The guns were turned on this party, but almost immediately the horses were shot, and thousands of the enemy's white-robed horsemen appeared from every point of the compass, having risen from the ground as if by magic.

Our little party abandoned the now useless guns and formed a square, each man lying down behind what cover he could find. It was calculated that we were surrounded by at least five thousand horsemen, some armed with modern rifles, others with old flintlocks, others with swords and spears. The firing was heavy, and we suffered many casualties. The Foreign Legion, however, fought with splendid coolness. The men lay there firing, joking with one another and shouting out insulting remarks to the foe. Old Prevost, who was a very big fat man and as brave as a lion, stood in the centre of the square encouraging his men. Suddenly the whole of the horsemen charged down upon our little band. This was one of the most exciting moments I have ever known, because if they really charged home, it would be all up with us. But we knew from previous experience that this is not the Moorish habit. On they came at a furious gallop, shouting and yelling and firing their rifles. We began to think it was all up with us. The men of the Legion redoubled their fire, and for the first time were told to use their magazines. It began to look very black for us, for the leading horsemen came to within two hundred and fifty yards before their courage failed. Then they swept across our front, firing wildly, and we knew we were saved.

The Moors kept up the fight for some time longer, and our small force had over fifty casualties out of two hundred and all the horses shot before we were relieved by an entire brigade from Casablanca. Two days later the gallant Prevost was shot dead by a Moorish sniper while I was talking to him, and now lies buried at Casablanca.

These native wars are full of incidents of this sort, but I have no space to relate more than this incident, the extraordinary escape of two friends of mine, Colonel Lewis, the correspondent of the *Times*, and Captain Granville Fortescue, late of the United States Army, during the Spanish campaign against the Riffian tribes at Melilla in 1909. These Riffians are terrible fighters, and the Spanish have never yet subdued them. In the gorge of the sinister mountain of Gourgu they cut off and destroyed an entire Spanish brigade under the unfortunate General Pintos, who was cut to pieces at the head of his men. Fortunate were those who were killed outright, for these savages took the wounded, bound their arms, placed them against rocks, and finished them off by throwing stones at their heads. When we reconquered the ground the sight was horrible. Hundreds of men lay there with their arms bound and their heads smashed to pulp.

I was the fortunate possessor of three good horses at Melilla, and on the morning of the big fight with the Bensickar tribe I rode one myself and lent the other two to Lewis and Fortescue. Just as we left camp I said: "If you get my horses killed, you will have to pay for them," and named a price for each. We parted when the attack commenced, as I chose to follow the right wing, while they accompanied the left. We had some very stiff fighting and a notable cavalry charge before winning the position. Later in the day I met my two friends on foot. "Where are my horses?" I asked. "Both dead," they replied. This was cheering news. It appears they had ridden forward too quickly and had outstripped the Spanish advance. Then they came to a stone kraal, and dismounted to get a better view of the field. About sixty Riffians crept up from the far side and poured in a volley at less than one hundred yards. Both horses were shot dead, but neither Lewis nor Fortescue were hit. They bolted like scared rabbits towards the advancing Spanish infantry, who, mistaking them for the enemy, opened up a furious fire. Fortescue lay down among some rocks, but Lewis ran right through the Spanish line. Yet neither was touched by friend or foe. Such is luck!

I never had such a crowded week of varied adventures as I did in the first Balkan War when with the Turkish army in Thrace during the great battle and rout of Lule Burgas. I had reached that town with extreme difficulty, and was without food and without horses. The confusion in the Turkish army was indescribable. No one knew if the enemy was advancing, or whether the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, Abdullah Pasha, intended to hold his positions. There was no wireless, no telegraph, and no telephone, whilst aeroplanes were only in their infancy, and had not yet reached the Balkans. I found the town occupied by Turkish cavalry under Sali Pasha, and tried to borrow a horse from them. Finally, the Mayor produced a wretched old screw and a still worse saddle. On the following morning I went to call on Sali Pasha, and found him drinking coffee in the old Han or inn. Suddenly it was announced that the enemy were advancing. There are some low wooded hills to the west of the town, but these had not been occupied. Sali Pasha dashed out of the town, with his cavalry following pell-mell, while I tried to keep up with them on my old screw. It was too late to save the situation. Already we could see the enemy silhouetted against the skyline of these low hills only a mile from the gates of Lule Burgas. Masses more shortly appeared, and at once commenced to advance. The Bulgarian infantry are excellent in attacking. The men are extremely brave and advance with great speed. The whole of the Turkish cavalry and some infantry were quickly driven in, and made for the shelter of the town under a heavy fire. I was swept along in the general confusion. The Turks having gained the cover of the houses then rallied and opened a heavy fire on the advancing enemy, which checked their advance for a short time. A staff officer dashed up shouting, "Everyone must clear out of the town and make for the high ground behind, where you will find our infantry

entrenched. The town cannot long be held. Only the rear-guard can remain."

At these ominous words the panic amongst the townspeople became indescribable. These unfortunate wretches, old men, women, children, and refugees from other villages, had no idea that the enemy was upon them. The Bulgarians enjoyed a reputation second to none for committing horrible atrocities on the civilian population of districts they conquered, and it became the obsession of all, even the oldest and most infirm, to get away. There is no more extraordinary or sadder sight in the world than to see the entire population of a panic-stricken city endeavouring to escape. Some flee immediately without stopping to think, others are so upset at leaving their home that they cannot make up their minds whether to leave their worldly possessions, and delay too long. Yet others carry immense loads of household goods with them which they are obliged to abandon on the road. A few make no effort to escape, and sit on the steps of their houses paralyzed by the unwonted scene.

I tried to make my way slowly to the rear, but was dragged into a vortex of men, women, children, carts, stray soldiers, unarmed men and wounded, all hastening to escape from the enemy's shrapnel, which had commenced to burst over the town from the hills behind. The confusion was awful. I lost my entire worldly possessions, which I had left in the town-hall, including my boots, and escaped in a pair of slippers. Fortunately the fleeing mob found shelter behind the Turkish army, which was entrenched on the hills to the east. This was the inauspicious commencement of the battle of Lule Burgas, which lasted for the next three days, and ended in the complete defeat of the Turks, who were starved out, and obliged to abandon all their positions.

The spectacle of a routed army, with its organization destroyed and all discipline at an end, is not a sight you care to see twice. The flight of the Turks from the fields of Lule Burgas to the lines of Cataldja, one hundred and forty miles away, will never be forgotten by those who took part in it. Not a unit kept its formation, for the men were starving and spread over the country searching every village and township for food. But Thrace had already been swept bare. Had the Bulgarian cavalry followed up their victory they could have captured the whole army. Mingled with the flying troops were thousands of refugees, men, women, and children, endeavouring to escape with their worldly goods packed into old carts or on mules or horses. Thousands died from sheer weakness and starvation, thousands more fell into the hands of the enemy, thousands reached the lines of Cataldja, and refusing to rally there, never stopped until they had reached Stamboul. Cholera broke out

THE FLIGHT OF THE TURKS FROM LULE BURGAS.

"THE SPECTACLE OF A ROUTED ARMY IS NOT A SIGHT YOU CARE TO SEE TWICE. THE FLIGHT OF THE TURKS WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN BY THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN IT."

Photo. by "Daily Mirror."

amongst this unhappy army, and twenty thousand were swept away in ten days. No people, except the Turks, could have survived such an accumulation of disasters. Every eye-witness on the spot cabled home that the "days of the Turk in Europe are numbered," or words to that effect.

Less than five years ago this terrible tragedy was enacted. To-day the Turks are fighting with all their old-time courage in Armenia, in Mesopotamia, in Palestine, and in Thrace, and have forced us to abandon Gallipoli. This is the change that German discipline and organization has brought about in five years. Yet we might have had this warlike race fighting on our side but for our ignorance, apathy, and short-sighted diplomacy. We who for centuries have been the traditional defenders of the Mohammedan race have forced the most virile of its branches into the arms of the Hun.

Exciting incidents, horrible scenes, and appalling catastrophes have become such mere commonplaces in the present world war that to select any which have made a paramount impression on the mind is no easy task. But to me the early days of the war, when the Allies were struggling against overwhelming odds and crushed by a concentration of artillery fire to which they could make no adequate reply, and when so much hung in the balance, were of much greater interest than the present long-drawn-out hammer-and-tongs slaughter on the western front. It is now generally recognized that the most critical days of the war were those in the autumn of 1914, when the new German armies were endeavouring to "bullock" their way through to Calais and to cut off the Allies from the Channel.

Ample justice has been done to the glorious *rôle* played by Sir John French's army during those critical days, and to my mind no page in our history can compare with the dying struggle of our old regular army before Ypres and on the Yser. But it must not be forgotten that before the bulk of the German armies turned south against our extenuated line, for a week they had made a desperate attempt to break through the Belgium line between Nieuport and Dixmude. The heroic stand made by the exhausted Belgian Army throughout that critical week is apt to be obscured by the still more Homeric struggle which followed. Yet, had the unsupported Belgian Army given way, the enemy would have reached Calais, and the position of our troops coming piecemeal from the Aisne would have been rendered precarious in the extreme. For a week the fighting had been of the most desperate nature, and the issue constantly hung in the balance. The climax was reached at dusk on the evening of October 21st, when the Germans made their final great attack on Dixmude, hoping to capture the town and pierce the Belgian line. The artillery fire was incessant. Dixmude was burning fiercely, and the French supports, which had been hastily sent up by Joffre, could not get up for some time, as it was impossible to pass through Dixmude owing to the shell-fire and burning buildings. Hundreds of wounded came crawling or limping back from the trenches, each with a different tale. Some said the Belgians were holding their own. Others that it was all over, and that in a few minutes the Germans would have possession of the town. The suspense was frightful, waiting there on the outskirts of Dixmude, not knowing whether the line would hold or whether it would break, letting through masses of bloodthirsty Huns to turn the countryside into a second Louvain.

Suddenly the German artillery fire ceased for a few minutes, and we heard through the gathering darkness the hoarse shouts and yells of the German infantry charging with the bayonet. This was the crisis. The cheers were met by a redoubled rifle fire, and the terrible "pat-pat-pat" of the machine guns. The Belgian batteries fired in salvoes, the shells all bursting simultaneously in groups of red flame over the advancing infantry. The cheers of the attackers died away under this deluge of lead, counter cheers arose from the trenches, and the German field batteries and "Jack Johnsons" recommenced their shelling.

It was now 7 p.m. and quite dark. The scene was majestic in the extreme. Dixmude was a red furnace. The flames shot upwards, showing clouds of white smoke above. St. Jacques, farther south, was a smaller furnace. All along the line the shells were no longer bursting in clouds of white and black smoke. All had put on their blood-red mantles. Close at hand everything was bathed in inky darkness; farther off the towns and villages showed up clearer than they had done during the day. It was the end of the great attempt to break the Belgian line. The road to Calais had been closed. The disgruntled Hun turned south to meet a worse disaster against the British line.

Dog-Leg Rapids.

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

YOUNG JOE was a trapper. His father, Old Joe, whose memory is still green up and down the river, was a trapper before him. Father and son were accounted "lucky." But Old Joe spent his money, whereas Young Joe saved nearly every dollar he made. Old Joe had been "one of the boys"; Young Joe wore the blue ribbon of a stainless and abstemious life.

From this brief statement of fact it may be inferred that Young Joe's solemn declaration that he meant to "quit the woods and git married" aroused more excitement amongst the girls than it did amongst the boys of Dog-leg.

"He won't git no girl," said one of the boys.

A sage answered the rash prophet:—

"That is whar you show yer cussed ignerunce of females. They perfer these quiet, mealy-mouthed fellers every time. I reckon it ter be the motherin' instinct. Some mighty nice purty girl'll up an' marry Young Joe, jest because he looks an' acts as if he was Mary's little lamb."

"Wal, mebbe some peaky-faced, cow-hocked, flat-chested schoolmarm'll take pity on him."

"My son—yer way off agen. Young Joe'll pick a peach."

Very soon it became known that Young Joe was courting Euphemia Biddle, only child of Josiah Biddle, ex-timber-cruiser and proprietor of the Biddle House, Dog-leg, Oregon.

The audacity of this courtship simply confounded the stalwart lumbermen of Dog-leg. Matrimonially considered, Pheenie was the prize-packet of the township—pretty, *petite*, and pert. Mr. Biddle regarded her, very properly, as the apple of his eye. And, in the fullness of time, the Biddle House and other valuable property would belong to Pheenie.

She had many suitors, but we are concerned in this narrative with two: Young Joe and Shorty Sissons, called "Shorty" because he was six foot two in his stockings and a big bull of a man. Young Joe may be envisaged as his antithesis in all things.

At first Shorty treated the affair from a humorous point of view.

"Young Joe," he remarked, "is after a fine pelt. I'd jest as lief he did monkey around Pheenie, because he'll keep likelier fellers off the grass. If he gets het up any, I'll hev to talk to Young Joe."

"He ain't no talker, anyway," said a friend.

This was true. Young Joe, like most trappers, had the great gift of silence. For many months each year he tended his traps alone. When he paddled down river into the haunts of men, with his pelts piled high in the stern of the canoe, he would nod his head in passing and smile. After the sale of his pelts, when accosted cheerily in the market-place by would-be burners of another's oil, he would smile as before and go his way—to the local bank. Speaking ornithologically, with a flying reference to migrating birds, he may be said to have had a sense of direction. He held warily aloof from crowds.

His wonderful gift of silence may have attracted Pheenie, who could wag a lively tongue. She became aware of his long, penetrating glances. When she asked, coquettishly, "What you think about all the time?" he replied, curtly, "You."

The monosyllable sank deep into Pheenie's heart. She divined somehow that Shorty's thoughts were concentrated upon Mr. Sissons. As much, and more, could be said of his talk. Shorty, according to himself, had done great deeds on a score of rivers, and was now boss of the biggest logging camp in the county. He assured her that he could lick his weight

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in wild cats, and Pheenie never doubted it. Whenever she looked at this big, black mountain of a man she felt absurdly small and frail. She was aware that he dominated her, that he regarded her as his for the asking, and that her father—just such another giant—approved the match. Mr. Biddle spoke derisively of Young Joe.

"Why does he come around?" he asked Pheenie.

"You ask him," suggested Pheenie.

"Is he huntin' trouble with Shorty?"

"I reckon you mean that Mr. Sissons'll make trouble with a man half his size."

"Young Joe ain't a man—not what I call a man."

"He don't act like some men. He ain't everlastin'ly braggin' 'bout what he kin do; he ain't the rip-roaringest male in creation. I'll own up that what he doesn't say interests me more'n Mr. Sissons' remarks. He's gittin' the habit o' repeating himself."

"Meanin'?"

"Jest that. I'm tired o' hearin' the same old tune."

Mr. Biddle stared hard at his daughter. When he spoke he was almost inarticulate with surprise.

"Say, Pheenie, you ain't gone back on Shorty, hev ye?"

"He fatigues me awful, that's all."

"You don't want him around?"

"I do not."

At this moment business summoned Mr. Biddle to his bar. He was so dazed that he handed out his own particular bottle of whisky instead of the special brand provided for ordinary customers.

He noticed Shorty sitting in a corner of the room, chewing and smoking a ten-cent cigar. Presently he joined him. Shorty began to eat his cigar faster than usual; otherwise he made no sign. Mr. Biddle said, pleasantly:—

"How you makin' it, Shorty?"

Shorty removed what was left of the cigar from his large mouth and expectorated freely.

"I'm snowed in," he replied. Then he added, with invincible optimism, "Temporarily."

Mr. Biddle remarked, casually:—

"A bold game pays."

"Not always. Not with all females. Some on 'em hates nice fresh meat and has an onnateral hankerin' fer ice-cream. They kin be made to see the fullishness o' sech tastes, but it takes time to train 'em, and what worries me is—hev I the time ter spare?"

He gazed sorrowfully at Mr. Biddle, who said, firmly:—

"I allow that ye hev."

Shorty murmured, gloomily:—

"I ain't huntin' trouble with Young Joe. I look over his head, an' to the right an' left of the leetle cuss when we happen together, but he's too small fer me to man-handle. Anyways, that's how I feel about Young Joe."

"Sech feelin's does you credit."

Shorty continued:—

"It's up to you, as Pheenie's father, to try out Young Joe."

"Up to *me?*"

"In Pheenie's eyes, he's—IT, the biggest thing in Dog-leg. She sees him with the patent magnifyers o' female affection. If you could make Pheenie see Young Joe as he is, if you could hang him up ter dry on yer clothes-line as a warnin' to all chicken-livered dwarfs an' dudes ter keep outer yer home-pasture, I should be obligated some."

"Chicken-livered?"

"You wasn't on to that? Yes, sir, Young Joe ain't got no sand. He's a river-man, but you ask him to run yer rapids."

"I will," said Mr. Biddle.

The Dog-leg Rapids began just below Mr. Biddle's hotel, and might be adequately described in toboggan terms as the Cresta Run of the river. The broad stream flowing placidly above the town here narrowed between high banks and then boiled downwards in a succession of cascades beautiful to behold but dangerous to navigate, because the river twisted like a writhing snake. A nasty, ugly bit of water, where in earlier days many a man had met his death.

Mr. Biddle spoke to Young Joe that same evening. He found the trapper alone with Pheenie in the parlour, and the lights were burning low. The father, however, could see plainly that his daughter's eyes were shining, and upon the impassive face of the trapper lurked the ghost of a smile.

Young Joe said, quietly:—

"Mr. Biddle, Pheenie and I have fixed things to git married, if you've no objection."

"You calcilate to take Pheenie on yer trips?"

"I calcilate to buy a half-interest in a small store that's likely to grow bigger."

"Here in Dog-leg?"

"Yep."

Mr. Biddle looked unhappy. Pheenie, so to speak, was more than a daughter. Outside of the bar, she "ran" the hotel, reigning supreme in kitchen and dining-room. She earned good money that her father kept in his own possession. He would have affirmed

—to do him justice—that he was "saving" many dollars for his only child. Under the softening influence of his own brand of whisky he had said as much many times. He could hardly envisage life without Pheenie. He remarked, not too discreetly :—

"Thar's others wants Pheenie, beside you."

"I know it. But Pheenie wants me."

"Yes," murmured Pheenie.

Mr. Biddle then said, solemnly :—

"This yere is a wild country, and it takes a man as is a man to look after a woman."

Young Joe remained silent; Pheenie glanced at him, and took up the cudgels.

"Air you hintin' that my Joe ain't a man?"

"He ain't bin tried, Pheenie."

"Mr. Shorty Sissons has, an' convicted too!"

This was the unhappy truth, and Mr. Biddle knew it. Shorty, in a too hot youth, had served a term in the State penitentiary for manslaughter. But the fact that he was quick with his gun was not reckoned a disability in lumber-camps. Mr. Biddle knew, moreover, that Young Joe walked the green earth unarmed and defenceless. To draw a pistol on him and use it meant murder—in the first degree. The blustering Shorty was well aware of this. Young Joe said, hesitatingly :—

"Do you want ter try me, Mr. Biddle?"

"Yes, young man, I do. You've bin up an' down our river considable, but I've yet to learn that you've run Dog-leg Rapids. It takes sand ter do that."

Young Joe answered, politely :—

"I aim ter take no onnecessary chances. My father used to run Dog-leg because he had to. 'Twasn't a portage in his days."

"Thet's so. But the boys around these parts run Dog-leg fer fun."

"I see. You want me to risk my life—fer fun?"

"No—fer Pheenie. I ain't stuck on yer shape, but Pheenie is."

"If I run Dog-leg, you give me Pheenie?"

"I ain't his ter give, Joe. Don't you be flimflammed into this foolishness. Shorty Sissons put father on to this low-down play. It's jest like him. It'd tickle him plum to death ter see you drownding before his eyes. Now, don't you give that mountain o' flesh the devilish satisfaction of attendin' yer funeral."

Young Joe smiled at her, nodding his head. Then his mild blue eyes met the congested orbs of Mr. Biddle.

"I'm scared of Dog-leg," he admitted, ingenuously.

Mr. Biddle snorted.

"But I want Pheenie," continued Young Joe. "And I want her to be married accordin' to Hoyle, from her father's house and with his blessin'. I ain't askin' fer more'n that."

"Wal, young feller, if you want the girl, you know what ter do."

"Yep—and I'll do it."

Mr. Biddle frowned.

"When?"

"To-morrer."

Pheenie jumped up. Her eyes were sparkling; her cheeks glowed. Young Joe gazed at her in speechless admiration. She spoke curtly to her sire.

"You mean this?" Mr. Biddle nodded, portentously. "Yer a party to this put-up job?" He made no reply. The girl waited a moment; then she said, grimly :—

"I take a hand in this game. If Joe runs Dog-leg he must take me with him. Kin you swim, Jodie?"

"Yep."

"That's fine! I never learnt swimmin'. Mebbe, you'll save my life. I'd love to hev you do it."

Let it be stated here that Mr. Biddle, according to his lights, loved Pheenie. Let it be added that he had run Dog-leg—once. More, he knew that Pheenie was quite as obstinate as himself. These reflections passed swiftly through his brain as he stared and glared at his daughter's pretty face. Looking at that face, he remembered that two years before he had helped to drag ashore what was left of a young man who had tried to run Dog-leg—and failed. He said, thickly :—

"I forbid that, child!"

Pheenie laughed derisively.

"You forbid your daughter to run risks which you ask another man's son ter do—fer fun?"

"Yer a woman; he's a man."

"Yes, I'm a woman, and proud of it, because he's my man. You'd better back down, father; mebbe a harder job fer you than runnin' Dog-leg, but—if ye don't, if you stand in with this big, blasphemin', murderin' scallywag, whom I hate and despise, I stand in, too, with my Joe."

Mr. Biddle rose to his feet. It will never be known whether or not he believed his daughter to be bluffing. He said, with finality :—

"You stand in—and be hanged to ye!"

Having played what he deemed to be a trump card Mr. Biddle retired majestically to bed.

Pheenie took tactical advantage of her sire's retreat by occupying a frontal position on Young Joe's knee. With her arms about his neck and her cheek against his, she murmured, persuasively :—

" Joe, dear, let's skin outer this. We kin be married to-morrer morning."

Joe squeezed her to him. For a small man he had a very satisfying grip. But he remained, as usual, almost exasperatingly silent.

" What you say, Jodie ? "

At that Young Joe laughed, and his laugh was pleasant to hear. Pheenie, pondering many things in her heart, noted the genuine mirth of her lover's laughter. Cowards, she decided instantly, do not laugh at such moments.

" I tole a whoppin' lie jest now," said Joe.

" Mercy ! "

" I ain't scared any of Dog-leg."

" What ? "

" I run Dog-leg—fer fun—two seasons back."

" You never told me."

" Pheenie, it was this way. I hated to brag about it, even to you. And with the boys it was more so. See ? "

" I see. Oh, Joe, I do love you ! You're my own little man ! "

Young Joe continued, thoughtfully :—

" Dog-leg, to a river-man as knows his business, ain't what it's cracked up ter be. That young feller yer dad snaked out o' the rocks was plum full o' whisky afore he started. I kin take you down, Pheenie, and I aim ter do it with the hull town a-lookin' on. Then we'll be married in style, accordin' to Hoyle."

" I ain't scared," declared Pheenie.

" Honest ! I'd be scared stiff if I thought you was. Pheenie, thar's another thing. Shorty brags that he's run Dog-leg, but he's a liar, too."

" Sakes ! How you know that ? "

" Wal—I heard him tell how he done it. That was enough fer me. He was just repeatin' what some other feller had told him, and he got mixed in the details. When me and you's run Dog-leg, I calcilate to hev some fun with Mister Shorty Sissons."

Pheenie giggled.

Next morning the town heard part of the truth, enough to excite the citizens of each sex. Pheenie's resolution to share risks with the man of her choice brought many thirsty souls to Mr. Biddle's bar. To all and sundry Mr. Biddle imparted the gilt-edged information that, in his opinion, Young Joe would back down at the last minute. Shorty offered to bet many dollars upon this issue. His bets were taken by a quiet trapper who knew Young Joe, and may have been acting for him. Young Joe was seen on the river in his own canoe, testing the toughness of a new pole. The event—if it took place—was publicly announced as a midday entertainment. At noon punctually Young Joe and Pheenie would embark in the canoe.

At half-past eleven Mr. Biddle weakened. Love for an only child triumphed over the coagulated obstinacy of a lifetime. He took Pheenie aside and said, testily :—

" You want Young Joe and, by Jing ! you kin hev him."

" I want more'n Joe."

" Meanin' ? "

" I'm marryin' a man, and I want the hull world ter know it."

" You'll git drownded—sure ! "

" Mebbe. It's this a-way, father. I'd sooner drown with Joe than live with any other man."

" Includin' me ? "

" Yes—includin' you."

" You perfer that peaky-faced leetle runt to—me ? "

" I do—for a stone-cold fact."

" He'll back down."

" If you was dead sure o' that, you'd feel a heap better'n ye're lookin'. To make yer mind easier I'll tell ye this. Joe kin do it, and he will do it, and I want to do it with him. Seein' as business is so brisk this morning, I reckon you'd better go back to the bar. One more pointer. Mr. Sissons is a particular friend of yours. See to it that he don't swaller too much whisky before noon."

" Why ? "

" Fer reasons which I'm not at liberty ter state."

Mr. Biddle returned to the bar, stupefied and quite incapable of putting his thoughts into words. But he believed (and hoped) with an ever-increasing conviction that Young Joe's liver would be publicly displayed white as its owner's blameless life.

At noon Pheenie and Joe stepped into the canoe. Pheenie, smiling pleasantly, sat down in the stern with her lover's earnest injunction " not to budge." They slid out into the stream. The crowd had collected farther down at the worst Dog-leg turn. To compare once more these rapids with the famous Cresta Run at St. Moritz, it will be elucidating to speak of this particular twist in the river as " Shuttlecock." " Battledore," an easier turn, was higher up. Below both lay a narrow passage, with fanged rocks on each side. Below the passage again, in another bend of

the river, was the whirlpool with its dangerous undertow. From the coign of vantage selected by the crowd a good view of these four danger-spots could be obtained.

But those who had assembled in the expectation of witnessing either a ridiculous fiasco or a bad accident were sadly disappointed. Young Joe gave a flawless performance. When he stepped ashore, to be acclaimed with ringing cheers, there may have been three pints of water in his canoe—not more. Indeed, the feat seemed so easy that the many onlookers who were not river-men decided hastily that the perils of Dog-leg had been grossly overrated. Mr. Biddle shook hands with Young Joe, and said, pontifically :—

"She's yours, my son."

At this moment Shorty approached Young Joe, and exclaimed :—

"I couldn't hev done it slicker myself."

Young Joe, had he been as ingenuous and innocent as he appeared, might have acclaimed in this speech some sportsmanlike feeling. He recognized, instead, what is called in the West a "gallery play." He knew, in every fibre of his small, neat body, that this giant had deliberately plotted to kill him. But he smiled as he replied, not loudly but very clearly :—

"Will *you* do it, Shorty ?"

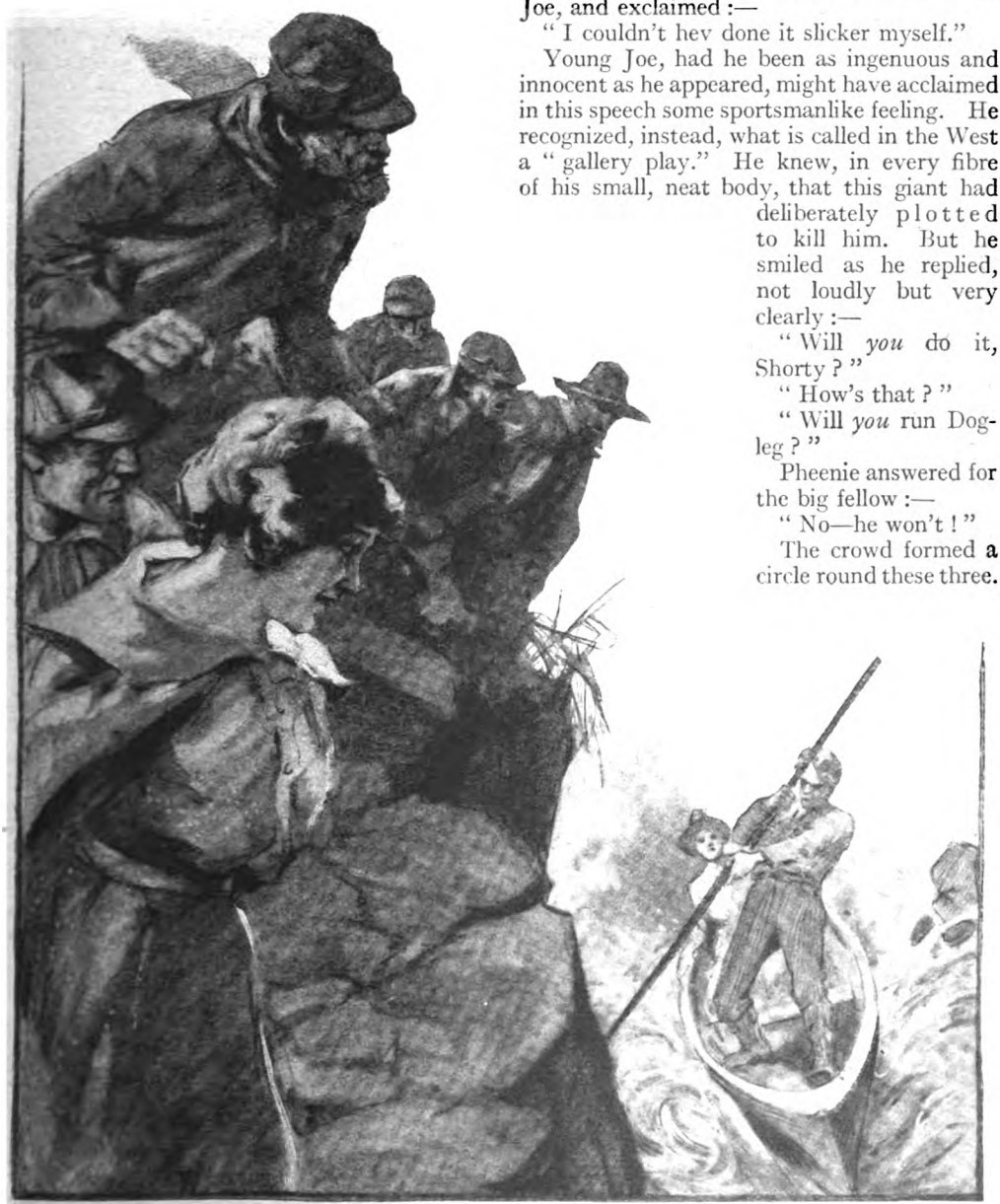
"How's that ?"

"Will *you* run Dog-leg ?"

Pheenie answered for the big fellow :—

"No—he won't !"

The crowd formed a circle round these three.



"FROM THE COIGN OF VANTAGE SELECTED BY THE CROWD A GOOD VIEW OF THE DANGER-SPOTS COULD BE OBTAINED."

For a moment the silence became tense. Then Pheenie laughed.

Shorty may have been half-drunk, but he grasped the sense of the situation. To refuse this challenge after Pheenie's laugh meant a headlong fall from a pinnacle of conceit and self-advertisement.

He said, hoarsely, "O' course I'll do it."

"When?" asked Pheenie.

"Right now."

The fickle crowd applauded. The tension relaxed. To anybody with Shorty's experience the running of Dog-leg was a ha'penny matter. The river-men began to chaff the big fellow. What girl would he ask to share his joy-ride? And so forth. Young Joe, however, with the keen eye of a trapper, marked signs which escaped the crowd—the shifty glance, the pendulous lower lip, the "hunted" expression. He said, quietly:—

"Do it to-morrer, Shorty."

"Right now," repeated Mr. Sissons.

He strode off, followed by half-a-dozen friends. The crowd moved slowly back to the bluff crowning the rapids. But Pheenie and Joe remained near the landing-place, just below the whirlpool.

"I'm kinder sorry," said Joe.

"I ain't," said Pheenie, fiercely.

Those on the bluff described more or less adequately what followed. A canoe glided swiftly into "Battledore." Mere gravitation carried it safely to the edge of "Shuttlecock." But here, where the river turned sharply, one—only one—firm shove of the pole was necessary, where a rock starkly rose out of mid-channel. And here—according to the testimony of experts—Shorty made his first blunder. He pushed too hard against the rock. The canoe raced into "Shuttlecock" slightly aslant instead of straight. Mere

"IF HE HEARD, HE WAS TOO PALSIED BY TERROR

balance, bred by long experience, averted disaster, but the canoe was rocking badly as it sped towards the narrow passage. Shorty, stabbing with his pole, tried to steady his frail craft. The canoe plunged, like a runaway horse. A synchronized gasp of dismay came from the spectators. Mr. Biddle remarked, oracularly :—

"He's a goner."

It was obvious, even to the children present, that Shorty had lost his head. Mere luck, toper's luck, carried him through the narrows. The canoe must have grazed the rocks a dozen times, but the volume of water held it on its course.

The skirting of the whirlpool remained.

By this time the canoe was in sight of Young Joe and Pheenie. It no longer floated like a dogwood petal upon the maddened stream. Much water had been shipped, buoyancy had gone. Young Joe shouted :—

"Push for all yer worth!"

The roar of the falls was in Shorty's ears. If he heard, he was too palsied by terror to act. He pushed feebly; his pole slipped; to the amazement of the beholders he fell overboard, and the canoe, relieved of his weight, danced blithely on upon a steadier keel. To use a phrase of the hunting-field, the boss of a big lumber-camp had "cut a voluntary." But friends and enemies knew that he was a powerful swimmer, well able to strike out boldly for the shore.

Shorty made no such attempt. In falling overboard his head must have struck a rock. His huge body rose to the surface with no more initiative about it than a log. Young Joe slipped off his coat.

"No—ye don't!" screamed Pheenie, clutching at him.

He said, sharply :—

"We done it."

Then he tore himself loose and plunged into the river.

If the crowd thirsted for excitement, that lust was likely to be gratified. Time became the essence of the situation. Could Young Joe reach Shorty before he was sucked into the whirlpool? No human being could escape alive from the clutch of that. Joe shot across the stream, using the side-stroke. Shorty sank. Was he sucked under? Joe dived for him.

And then a great shout went up from the bluff. Joe appeared with his quarry. He turned upon his back, grasping Shorty's huge head with his hands, holding him between his knees. Inch by inch, skill and courage prevailed. Another shout, louder than the first, died away amongst the tops of the spruces. Pheenie discovered that she was shedding the gladdest tears of her life.

But later, when she whispered proudly, "Oh, Jodie, I'm ever so glad you saved him!" Young Joe said, with a humour wasted upon his future wife, "Why, Pheenie, if I hadn't, could I hev collected them bets?"

TO ACT. HE PUSHED FEEBLY; HIS POLE SLIPPED."

There's A Silver Lining.

BY

MAY EDGINTON

Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

"YOUR presumption," said the General, "is nothing less than appalling. Had I not seen and heard you and my daughter with my own eyes and ears—— I prefer to say no more. We will drop the subject for ever. How a young fellow of your age, your lack of all financial expectations, not to say your junior rank——"

"But, George," said Lady Topperly.

"Be quiet!" said the General; "it is all your fault. Have I not said that the subject is not to be discussed further? As I was saying, Mr. Pleasant, I am astonished and shocked. When I asked your commanding officer—at Lady Topperly's request—to bring some of his junior officers who were dancing men to the little charity affair in my gardens last night, I never dreamed of the lengths to which such impudence as yours would go——"

"But, George——" murmured Lady Topperly.

"Be quiet!" said the General. "It is all your fault. It always is. You *would* give the entertainment, and these al fresco affairs, with bands and things on summer evenings—besides, as I remarked just now, we will drop the subject. I prefer it. As for you, Mr. Pleasant, I see you making an utter fiasco of your military career. There is too much frivolity among junior officers nowadays. It is thoroughly disgraceful. I have put my foot down about it. I tell you that. I will not have it in my command. You will read in Orders what I have said. Have you read my Orders this morning?"

"No, sir," replied Edward Pleasant.

The General's silence was so loud that Lady Topperly commenced once more:—

"But, George——"

"Be quiet!" said the General. "Everything is your fault. *Will* you leave the subject alone? It has been a disgraceful affair throughout. I do not like your demeanour, Mr. Pleasant. It does you no credit. I have no more to say—no more at all. I sent for you to express my strong disapproval, and I have expressed it. Your audacity——"

"George," said Lady Topperly, "after all there are so few eligible——"

"Be quiet!" said the General. "Can you consider Mr. Pleasant in any way eligible? I never heard of such an idea! And the way you pursue the point! It is all your fault. As for Mary's dress last night—it was positively two bead shoulder-straps and a pink petticoat. She is never to wear it again. I do not know what we are coming to. You may go, Mr. Pleasant."

Edward Pleasant saluted and walked out. He caressed his wee moustache and blushed pinkly.

"Joyous!" he said, "joyous, very!"

His motor-cycle was propped on its stand outside the front door. He kicked the stand away with his brogued foot, whirled the engine round, and sailed away. There was a dear little red silk cushion on the carrier, but it seemed that Mary Topperly would perch thereon no more.

The five miles of dusty suburban roads back to camp were like a long bad dream.

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As he wheeled in and limply took the salutes of the sentries at the gates, Edward, who was the youngest and smallest subaltern in "M" Company of the 100th Oxfordshires, was acutely wretched.

Entering the mess at tea-time, he was further reduced by the forlorn look of the place. A few brother-officers lay in chairs, staring into vacancy. Fewer still evinced a faint desire for tea. No gay parties were to be found in the length and breadth of the room; no girlish voices brought happiness into M Company's mess on the day following the General's evening garden-party.

Edward walked limply in and looked around him.

"What is the matter?" he asked, vaguely.

"Everything," replied the senior subaltern.

"Hasn't anyone any visitors? Aren't there any girls to-day?" said Edward.

No one answered him.

"What's this about Orders?" said Edward, rather fearfully.

A groan rolled through the groups.

"No ladies in mess," said the senior subaltern.

"No taking any girl out to any place of public amusement in town!"

"No appearance in any theatre or restaurant or tea-shop!"

Edward Pleasant viewed the future in silence.

"The General drew up the Orders at midnight, they say," said the senior subaltern, "and sent them over to be posted before lunch this morning."

"Something had got his goat. Something he saw in the garden," added the company bombing officer. "Do you know anything about it?"

Edward blushed pinkly and caressed his little moustache.

"They'll have us faintin' in the streets for lack of nourishment," said he.

A hollow laugh was raised with difficulty around him.

"Don't get the wind up," said the senior subaltern; "you needn't worry about that. It's all provided for. The General has begged the loan of the British Museum for the officers of the 100th Divison!"

The bombing officer added: "Tea and coffee to be served there five till seven each afternoon, barring Saturdays and Sundays, for any of us who happen to be in town."

"They're opening up a few rooms for us."

"Sword and Bond are doing the teas. They didn't want to. They didn't think the place 'ud pay."

"The General thinks it's quiet, and out of temptation's way; and there's plenty of serious reading."

"But girls?" said Edward.

"Ah, girls!" said the bombing officer.

A gusty sigh blew round the mess.

"If you asked a girl to the British Museum——" began the senior subaltern.

"She'd come," Edward replied, pensively.

"Where is the place, anyway?" asked the bombing officer.

Nobody knew. People sat about glooming.

"It's joyous!" said Edward. "Joyous, most!"

Edward thought a good deal that evening. Young he might be and of an insignificant appearance, though of an endearing personality; but he did not lack ability. He was full, too, of dreams and hopes and courage. When everyone else despaired, Edward Pleasant did not. His hut-mate thought it wonderful because in the morning Edward awoke brightly and turned his young, pink face cheerfully to the world.

"Everything is interestin', really," he said, as he sat in his tub.

"Not the British Museum," his companion replied.

"Even that," said Edward, "might have its possibilities. One never knows till one tries. I didn't want to go to the General's garden-party; but, after all, the grounds were big, and there *was* a summer-house, and it was quite worth it."

Edward threw himself into the pursuit of interest with all his accustomed verve. No sooner was work over for the day and permission granted than he flung himself on the Douglas and fled up to town. He betook himself through strange labyrinths to the inimitable temple of erudition. It seemed very cold and large. The first thing he did was to go straight towards the reading-room to the refreshment-room on the left. Two elderly females and a white-haired waiter rose up to serve him. They seemed positively pleased to see him, and asked if he had any friends coming. Edward sat down and ate a small bun commensurate with the regulations. After a while other men stole in and looked around rather wildly. They were two captains, an adjutant, and some subalterns from the Nth Bucks, and they seemed somewhat relieved and reassured to see Edward there. He looked nice and homely and comfortable sitting before his tea-tray.

When he saw them he nodded cheerily, and said: "Queer kind of place, what? But sort of—new."

"THE MUMMY DANCES AT TEA TIME WERE AN EVER-GROWING ATTRACTION."

They were too dejected to answer; and when they had seen the waitresses their dejection grew.

"So new!" said Edward, with enthusiasm; "I've never seen anything like it. It's giving me—sort of thrills. It does us good to get something—well, new."

With Ciro's closed, other resorts waxing decorous from fear, and several commands beginning to think seriously over the lead given by General Sir Horace Topperly of the 100th Division, it is no wonder that the rumour which crept about regarding the new place to which one could go in the afternoons, somewhere behind Oxford Street in the Bloomsbury vicinity, was taken up. The Service clubs and the gayer elements of society buzzed with it. The junior officers of the 100th Division found themselves enjoying a sort of popular notoriety. Their invitations to tea were sought with a flattering pertinacity, and that portion of the British Museum which was open to them hummed with light and life from five till seven. It is unrecorded what the more studious ticket-holders in the library thought, for they barricaded their stronghold as a beleaguered city.

Edward Pleasant was never busier. Almost daily, wangling permission, he drove his little Douglas up to town. He made research fashionable. In M Company he found a young gentleman with leanings towards Egyptian lore, and together they compiled very interesting biographies of the female tenants of the mummy-room, which made popular and hair-raising reading. Edward or the Egyptologist read aloud, and the reading circle which probed into the past of the famous mummy Amen-topl was well attended each day.

The Mummy Dances at tea-time, too, were an ever-growing attraction.

Girls who could trust their figures, and leave their mothers at home, proved ardent disciples. Park Lane cars and racing two-seaters blocked Museum Street, and Russell Square was like a mass meeting.

If you wanted to take a girl somewhere saucy, you ingratiated yourself with any subaltern of the 100th Division, wangled an invitation, and there you were.

Edward Pleasant's face began to appear in the weekly papers; and new numbers were introduced into musical comedies for the express purpose of drawing his crowds of admirers to the theatres where they were given.

Edward, does your C.O. know
All that you're a-doing of;
All that you're a-doing of——

was actually sung by errand-boys in the streets; and the Metropolitan police from Bayswater to Battersea knew him by sight, as he drove by on his Douglas.

When one understands that this all came to pass within the first three weeks after its initiation, one can realize that the enthusiasm of Edward Pleasant was likely to carry him far.

During the third week the Duchess of Blanket came. She was a charming sport of about seventy years of age, and she kept up with the best of the girls in the matter of

décolletées and short skirts and the latest games. She didn't happen to know personally any officer of the 100th Division, but she drove up audaciously, inquired for Mr. Edward Pleasant, said she had been asked to tea but couldn't remember by whom, and smiled brightly.

Edward smiled too, and caressed his wee moustache.

"Was it I?" he murmured.

The Duchess was entranced and intrigued. She held in her arms the current copy of the *Weekly Tattle*, with Edward's face prominently displayed.

"Dear youth," said she, "I seem to know you so well!" She held his hand through the length of the entrance-hall.

After he had given her a cup of coffee, Edward led her straight to the exclamatory circle which sat round M Company's Egyptologist.

The Duchess listened with cries of horror and delight.

She withdrew into a quiet corner with Edward and became confidential with him, not to say intimate.

"Dear youth," said she, taking one of his hands between both hers, "it is a little early in life for me to think of it, perhaps, but I want to find a clever person to write my memoirs. After listening to that wonderful history which, I understand, you wrote yourself——"

"I did it," Edward replied, modestly.

"So *strong!*" said the Duchess, "so full of colour; so passionate. Do you really think she did all that, Mr. Pleasant?"

Edward replied: "We believe and hope so."

"So perfectly fascinating!" said the Duchess. "I feel that you would be a sympathetic collaborator for me, dear boy. I have, as the world knows, been married four times, and it is not my intention to marry again. But I would not like it to be thought that I *could* not marry a fifth time if I chose. Indeed, coming here and talking to you in this dear, quiet way has given me some new thoughts, and——"

The Duchess was interrupted by two Mummy Dancers, who wheedled their way slowly into the Mummy-Room. They happened to be M Company bombing officer and the Lady Aurea Sackrace. The Duchess gazed intently.

"How beautiful!" she exclaimed.

"It is very classic," said Edward.

"Who invented—where is it taught?"

"We teach it here," Edward explained.

"Really!" said the Duchess, "really! But I must have private lessons. You must come and see me, dear boy. We shall have to spend a great deal of time together about these memoirs—oh, a very, very great deal of time! That's Aurea Sackrace, is it not? I should have thought she was stouter than that. What are the—the swathings, dear Mr. Pleasant?"

"Bandages," said Edward. "We have plenty, you know. We are all issued with a number one field dressing."

"Well, it is too wonderful," the Duchess moaned, "it is too wonderful! You must come to see me. Next Sunday I shall be alone. Come after—what is it?—church parade, and spend the day with me. I take the greatest interest in you, the very greatest interest. I shall use my influence to obtain a staff appointment for you."

"I rather want to transfer into the Flying Corps," said Edward. "I'd rather like to meet some of these German birds, y' know, or these Turkeys——"

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed the Duchess, shuddering; "there are some lives too precious to risk!"

She went away smiling very much.

As Edward left the Museum half an hour

"'DEAR YOUTH,' SAID SHE, 'I SEEM TO KNOW YOU SO WELL!'"

"THE DUCHESS GAZED INTENTLY."

later, he was accosted by a clever-looking old gentleman, who had just left a large Daimler.

"Mr. Pleasant?" inquired the old gentleman, cordially.

Edward saluted.

"Now I want," said the old gentleman, "to take up a little, just a little, of your valuable time."

"I must be in mess at eight, sir," Edward replied.

The old gentleman betrayed a fair acquaintance with Edward Pleasant's movements and habits.

"To be sure," he said; "I quite appreciate it. You are motoring?"

Edward indicated the Douglas.

"Now," said the old gentleman, persuasively, "let me beg you to allow me to drive you down. We'll put your little machine up somehow; perhaps my chauffeur could strap her on the grid behind. Robins!"

While the perspiring chauffeur, two military and three civil policemen disposed of the Douglas quite efficiently, the old gentleman announced his identity by exclaiming:—

"Why, there's my girl coming out!"

"You are the Earl of Dunne?" said Edward, as he saw Lady Aurea tripping through the courtyard with the youngest bishop in England.

The old gentleman took Edward's arm genially. "Quite," he agreed, "quite. Now, my dear boy, now—we're off. Now for a little business. I have a sort of—er—interest in this concern."

The Earl took from his pocket a beautiful prospectus of a new motor-car company, which he pressed upon Edward's attention.

"Now, what I suggest," said he, very confidentially, "is that you are simply bound to fancy that little car if you saw her. Why not allow the company to make you a gift of one?"

"Why not, indeed?" replied Edward, thoughtfully.

"I thought you would see it," said the Earl. "We will send you one if you say the word; just a little two-seater to run about in and show your friends. She's a bonny thing—cerise, with nickel fittings. Exactly the car for you, in fact. You don't want a family coach. The running expenses would be ours, if you will forgive me mentioning such an insignificant detail."

"Certainly, sir," said Edward, "certainly. Please mention as many more details of the kind as you care to."

"As a matter of fact," said the Earl, more confidentially than ever, "we have already sent the car down to the Wayside garage, which is, I believe, conveniently close to your quarters."

"Of course," Edward observed, "holding a commission in His Majesty's Army, I could not possibly advertise. I'm afraid my C.O——"

"My dear boy!" protested the Earl, most distressed. "My dear boy, don't imagine for a moment that we should ask such a thing. Just enjoy yourself. That's all we want. Naturally, we do not offer you anything so insulting as a commission. Just the little car; all running expenses; a free *entrée* to all A.A. hotels in the British Isles by a certain arrangement we shall make. We are not asking you to advertise us. We just like to see a good fellow with a good car."

The Earl left Edward with many more kind expressions of generosity.

As Edward walked towards his hut, his servant met him with the news that a gentleman had been waiting for some while to see him, and would be deeply grateful for a few moments of his valuable time.

Edward found an awfully nice person seated on his camp-chair.

"Mr. Pleasant!" exclaimed the visitor, springing up.

Edward extended a limp hand.

"Been dancin'," he said; "rather tired."

"Ah!" exclaimed the stranger, "the Mummy Dance! I know—I know!"

"It's a hot little dance," said Edward—"all those bandages, you know. The girl who trussed me up this afternoon—she'd been a V.A.D. Believe me, she knew her job! But what should you know about the Mummy Dance, sir? I don't think I have had the pleasure of seeing you at the Museum."

"I should love to come," said the stranger; "I hear it's very bright. But may I introduce myself, Mr. Pleasant, and get to business, or I shall trespass too much on your precious time?"

He handed a card:—

MR. ARTHUR DE LERES,
The Royal Tobacco Company.

"May I offer you a cigarette, Mr. Pleasant?" he inquired.

When Edward had accepted and lighted one, he resumed:—

"I hope you like that brand, Mr. Pleasant? It is ours. We think we may say that it is the only cigarette extant fit for a gentleman to smoke. The price is only thirty shillings a hundred. Cheap, of course—still, we realize that war-time is war-time. Now, why shouldn't we send you a thousand of those cigarettes, and ask you to accept them as a little mark of our admiration?"

"I dunno," said Edward, after thinking it over. "I see no reason at all why you shouldn't, myself."

"That's very charming of you," said the ambassador of the Royal Tobacco Company, earnestly. "As a matter of fact, anticipating your kind approval and permission, we have already dispatched a thousand. They are, no doubt, waiting for you by your evening's post."

"As long as you are not asking me to *advertise* you," said Edward, "which, as an officer in His Majesty's service, I could not consent to do——"

But he was interrupted by the horrified cries of the tobacco ambassador.

"THE GIRL WHO TRUSSED ME UP THIS AFTERNOON—SHE'D BEEN A V.A.D. SHE KNEW HER JOB!"

"My dear sir! Oh, Mr. Pleasant! We are perfectly aware that such a thing is simply *not done*. Our business being such a high-class one, we deal only with gentlemen, and are familiar with their principles and code. As a matter of fact, we only want you to enjoy our cigarettes; hand them about among your friends, and so on. Of course, you will understand that—we might beg you, as a favour or compliment to ourselves, not to smoke any other brand while we keep you liberally supplied with these."

"It will be rather expensive for you," said Edward, "but as long as you do your part, I shall do mine."

"We quite understand," Mr. de Leres continued, "that anything in the nature of a

commission would be an insult. We only beg, in token of our esteem, that any time you want a wedding present for one of your friends, you will drop into our Piccadilly place and choose any of the smoker's luxuries therein which you may fancy."

Edward parted with the tobacco ambassador on very amiable terms.

He sent his servant for the evening's post. The cigarettes were there, and many letters. His correspondence was now vast; but among the applications for first option on his best ideas from well-known editors, his invitations, his bills, and his begging letters, and an epistle of congratulation from a dean on his popularization of an institute of learning and research too long neglected, was one which arrested his attention for quite a quarter of a minute.

The Syndicate of British Entertainments, Ltd., offered him a twenty-one years' contract at five thousand a year to become its Ideas Prospector as soon as the Army should no longer need his services.

Edward felt most horribly busy. So he just sighed, put his box of one thousand cigarettes under his arm, went into the mess, and became more popular than before.

He spent Sunday from morning church parade till late evening with the Duchess of Blanket. She culled from a storied past some very captivating material for her memoirs; but she seemed more than a little inclined to look into the future, too.

She ended her anecdotes more than once with the epigram—which she seemed to relish: "For a woman has never done with romance."

For a week she kept Edward in a constant ferment of correspondence, and the following Sunday she wished to collaborate with him again over the memoirs. She began to say, however, that she doubted if she was ripe for them yet; that the full tale of her life had still to be told.

She was a wonderfully vivacious woman.

On the following Tuesday Edward drove his little cerise two-seater up to town, threaded his way with difficulty through the thronging cars and carriages for a wide area about the Museum, and saw two never-to-be-forgotten figures ascending the steps.

They were General Sir Horace and Lady Topperly.

The youngest bishop in London was strolling in, too, with Lady Aurea Sackrace; the Earl of Dunne was already with the reading circle, hearing the story of the frail Amen-topl; and as Edward walked into the entrance-hall the Duchess of Blanket, in the dearest little abbreviated frock, annexed him with a proprietorial air.

She nodded to Sir Horace and extended a finger to Lady Topperly, but she retained fast hold on Edward's arm, as he stood before his General, saluting.

"This wonderful, *wonderful* young man is in your command, I understand, General," said the Duchess.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Lady Topperly, "it is that nice young——"

"Be quiet!" said the General. "How d'you do, Pleasant? how d'you do? I had meant to look in here before, but have been deuced busy, you know, Duchess. I always am. There seem to be some very charming people here."

His eyes were arrested by a lady passing wheedlingly through a doorway, abstracted with the mazes of the Mummy Dance.

"Isn't it classic?" the Duchess moaned.

"Oh, Horace," said Lady Topperly, "it is just a little——"

"Be quiet!" said the General. "It is classic; that makes the whole difference."

"You should join the reading circle at once, dear people," said the Duchess, with round eyes. "They are reading about that delightful Amen-topl, the lady mummy on the left of the door as you go in, and everyone is most thrilled."

"We found out some more about her on Sunday morning," said Edward, brightening a little. "It is worth listenin' to."

"And the love-story of the Assyrian gentleman and the other mummy!" cried the Duchess; "it is a triumph for research! And very Oriental indeed."

"Horace," said Lady Topperly, "I-——"

"Be quiet!" said the General. "Where is the reading circle?"

"Here is my publisher!" screamed the Duchess; "and there is another publisher! They have come to fight for you, dear boy! Over the memoirs, you know."

As two elderly gentlemen hurried through the entrance-doors towards the Duchess and Edward, Sir Horace and Lady Topperly passed on towards the Mummy-Room. There was no missing the way to the reading circle, who were applauding the latest secrets of the scandalous Amen-topl.

"I will offer a thousand pounds on account of royalties," exclaimed the first publisher, as he reached Edward's side, "for the Blanket Memoirs! I have the contract and the cheque in my pocket."

"Two thousand!" said the second pub-

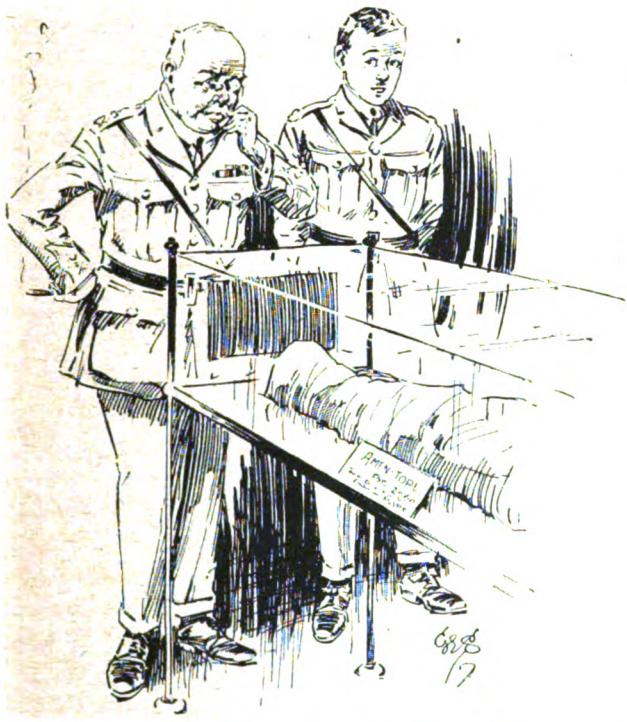
lisher, "b-b-but I have left the contract and cheque at home."

Edward bade the second publisher good-bye rather regretfully, accepted a fountain-pen, signed the contract, received the cheque, and followed General and Lady Topperly into the Mummy-Room. He was just in time to see the General spring up and hurry from the circle, which he had recently joined. Following, Edward found him entranced in contemplation of the peaceful form of Amen-topl.

Advancing respectfully, Edward stood beside him, and they gazed at the lady in silence.

"Pleasant," said the General, "do you think she really did?"

"Certainly, sir," Edward replied.



"THEY GAZED AT THE LADY IN SILENCE."

"It's a pity she has all those wrappings on," the General mused. "one might have—— I should rather have liked to form my own opinion."

"There's no doubt but that she was a great girl," said Edward, with enthusiasm.

They heard an agitated rustle behind them, and there was Lady Topperly.

"Is that the person?" said she, with a frigid look at Amen-topl. "I rather wonder, Horace——"

"Be quiet!" said the General. "It is history. History is perfectly refined. It makes all the difference."

"A gentleman is looking for Mr. Pleasant," said Lady Topperly.

"Be quiet!" began the General; but even as her ladyship spoke, a large, rich, happy man hurried into the room. Seizing upon Edward, he shook him by the hand, looking at him with positive affection.

"Edward Pleasant?" he cried. "Sir, you're a wonder! You're a genius! I'm managing director of the Syndicate of British Amusements. We wrote you awhile ago, but have as yet not had the privilege of a reply. So here I am, Mr. Pleasant, with our contract in my pocket, which sets out an advance on the previous figure. You didn't think it worth your consideration? Quite so! We absolutely understand. A man of your capacities isn't going cheap. Let me persuade you, however, to give us the option on your post-war services. You have my sincere admiration, sir, as the man who has made the British Museum the best and brightest show in town."

"Will you excuse me a moment, Lady Topperly?" asked Edward, very wearedly, as he struggled with the flap of the pocket where he kept his fountain-pen.

"Horace," said Lady Topperly, "see the figure!"

"Be quiet!" replied the General, looking over Edward's shoulder.

"Seven thousand!" he whispered, bemused.

"Mr. Pleasant," said Lady Topperly, "you have neglected us shamefully of late."

"Be quiet!" said Sir Horace. "Pleasant, my boy, as you know, I have always been interested in your career. I remember, faintly, having quite a long talk with you once. We must have one again. Come to dinner tomorrow at half-past seven."

When Edward drove up in his little cerise car to the Topperlys' residence at Cranberry Heath the next evening, he was not elated. Rather, he was becoming somewhat dazed, remote. Life was crowding upon him too fast.

But in the drawing-room beside her mother was Mary, meek in the little pink frock, which was hardly more than a very high-waisted skirt, and two bead shoulder-straps.

Edward had never guessed that a General could be so fatherly.

When, after a very *chic* little dinner, Mary, meek as a dove, followed her mother out, the General began to discuss Edward's future. His sympathy and appreciation were charming. He heard about the memoirs, and gathered satisfactory intelligence about his youngest subaltern's social circle, and spoke with respect of the post-war contract.

He gave Edward a port which he had never offered before save to Cabinet Ministers.

He asked Edward very kindly if he didn't think he ought, even if only as a sort of duty to the country, to marry.

"I think I am supposed to be going to marry, sir," Edward answered, rather faintly.

The General thought of Lady Aurea Sack-race, who had been mummy-dancing without ceasing the previous afternoon. Was it she?

"I have compromised the Duchess of Blanket," said Edward, more faintly yet.

"Oh, come!" said the General, very mellowly, "come! Come, my boy! Dear me! How did it happen? But no! On second thoughts, tell me nothing, much as I should like to hear. Sometimes the strategy of *laissez faire* is best. Strategy, Pleasant, strategy! We must all learn it."

Taking Edward's arm, he walked him out into the cool garden. "A cigar out here," he said, soothingly, "a little calm reflection. . . . I will bring the ladies out."

But it was only Mary who came, in the small pink frock.

She and Edward fled into each other's arms and kissed.

The little cerise car was drawn up in the moonlight before the hall steps.

"She looks a duck," Mary murmured.

"Get in," said Edward, revived and enchanted.

The General cried from some hidden watching-place: "Put on a thick coat, my child!" and Lady Topperly whispered to the butler, "Place a biscuit-box and a bottle of something *quickly* in Mr. Pleasant's car."

"THE CERISE CAR WENT DOWN THE DRIVE LIKE A RED LIGHTNING STREAK."

But not the General or Lady Topperly or the thick coat or the biscuit-box put out the jolly flame in Edward's and Mary's hearts. The cerise car went down the drive like a red lightning streak.

"Horace!" cried Lady Topperly, "do you think she'll be hap——?"

"Be quiet!" said the General. "They've eloped. It was touch and go, but they've done it."

LEST YOU FORGET!

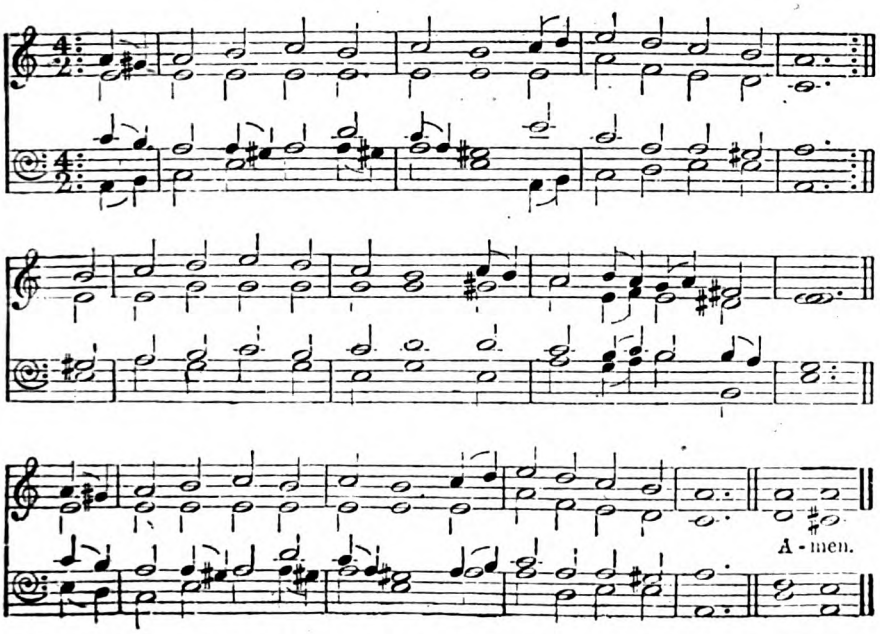
DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

THE PREMIER'S FAVOURITE WELSH HYMNS.

Selected by himself. With his own translation of the great hymn, "Jabez."

Photo. E. H. Mills.

Mr. Lloyd George, who is very fond, as a relaxation from the strain and cares of office, of singing the splendid hymns of his own most music-loving native land, has selected the five following as his chief favourites. He has, moreover, made a translation of one of them, which, although a strictly literal prose version, nevertheless conveys much of the feeling of the original, but the words are so intensely Welsh in sentiment and expression as almost to baffle a translator. Our

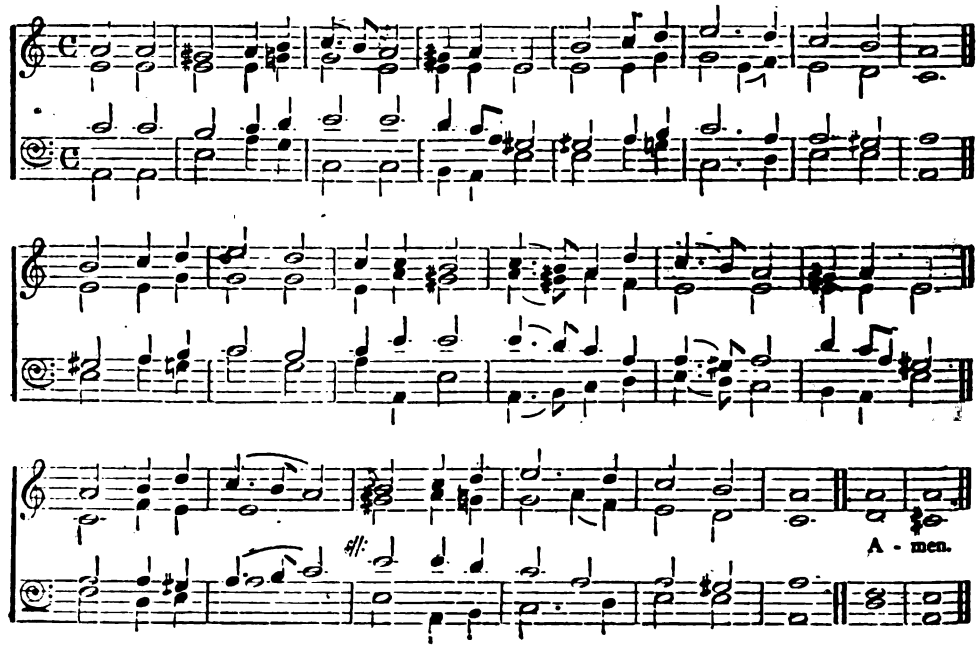


THE WELSH HYMN, "JABEZ"—THE WORDS, AND MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S TRANSLATION OF THEM, APPEAR ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

readers of musical tastes will be interested in trying them over, and comparing them with the most popular hymn-tunes of our own congregations. The difference in style is very marked, especially in the Welsh love for plaintive melodies and minor keys, so much so as to account, in great measure, for the fact that these five tunes are still unknown among ourselves. The reader can readily select, in the case of each of the following examples, some well-known English hymn that suits the metre, and so try the effect of the melodies as sung. He will, we think, find it grow upon him, and he will come to understand something of the deep emotional effect to which the Premier, like all his countrymen, is so keenly sensitive.

1.	1.
Os dof fi trwy'r anialwch, Rhyfeddaf fyth Dy ras, A'm henaid i lonyddwch 'Rol ganwaith golli'r maes, A'r maglau wedi eu torri, A'm traed yn gwbwl rydd: Os gwelir fi fel hynny, Tragwyddol foli a fydd.	If e'er I cross the wilderness, I shall forever marvel at Thy grace: My soul brought to tranquillity After a hundred times losing the day: And the fetters all shattered, And my feet completely free. If ever I am seen thus, Eternal will be the praise.
2.	2.
Os gwelir fi, bechadur, Ryw ddydd ar ben fy nhaith, Rhyfeddol fydd y canu, A newydd fydd yr iaith,— Yn seinio "Buddugoliaeth," Am iachawdwriaeth lawn, Heb ofni colli'r frwdyr, Na bore na phrydnawn.	If e'er I am seen, a sinner, One day at the end of my march, Wonderful will be the singing And new will be the song: Sounding "Victory!" For a full salvation, Without fear of losing the battle, Neither in the morn nor yet at eve.

THE WORDS OF "JABEZ," WITH A LITERAL TRANSLATION, LINE BY LINE, SPECIALLY MADE BY MR. LLOYD GEORGE.



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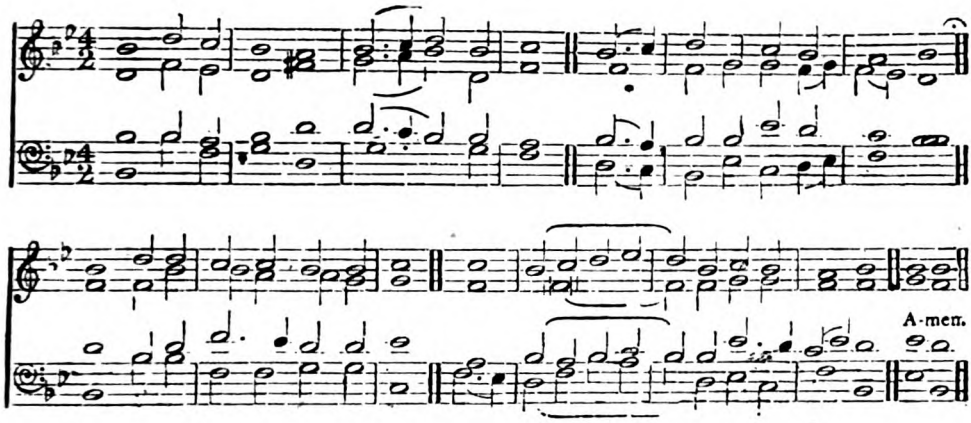

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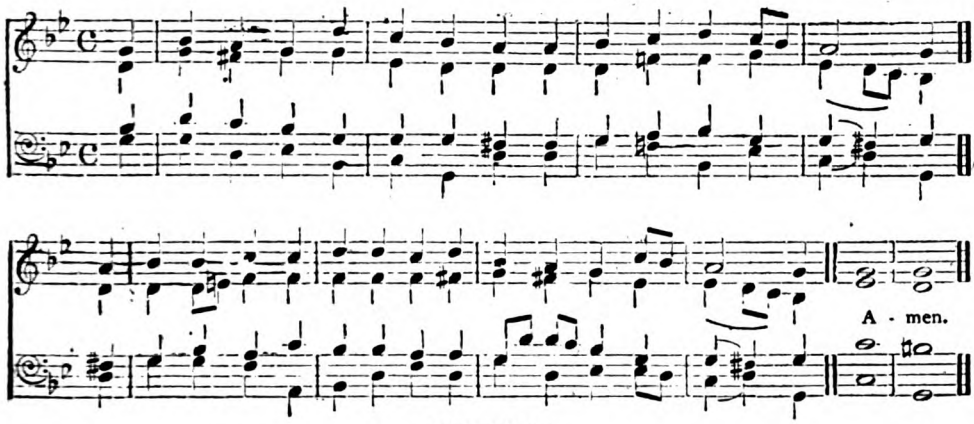

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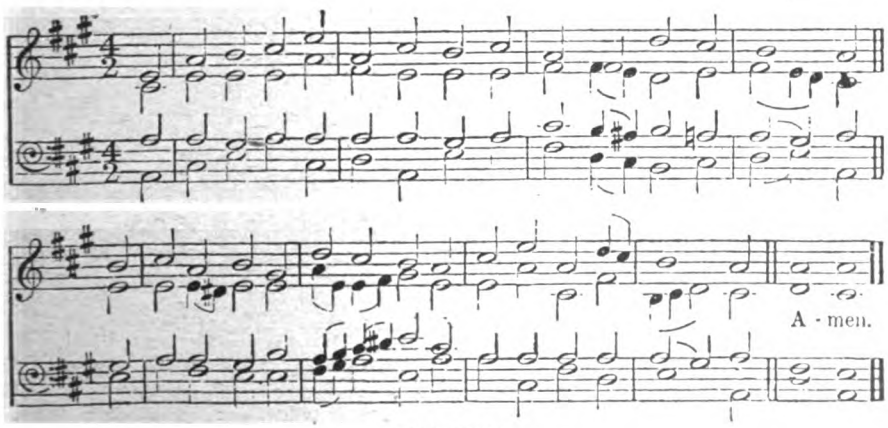

DYFRDWY.

THE CONVERT

BY W. W. JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

MR. PURNIP took the arm of the new recruit and hung over him almost tenderly as they walked along; Mr. Billing, with a look of conscious virtue on his jolly face, listened with much satisfaction to his friend's compliments.

"It's such an example," said the latter. "Now we've got you the others will follow like sheep. You will be a bright lamp in the darkness."

"Wot's good enough for me *ought* to be good enough for them," said Mr. Billing, modestly. "They'd better not let me catch——"

"*H'sh! H'sh!*" breathed Mr. Purnip, tilting his hat and wiping his bald, benevolent head.

"I forgot," said the other, with something like a sigh. "No more fighting; but suppose somebody hits me?"

"Turn the other cheek," replied Mr. Purnip. "They won't hit that; and when they see you standing there smiling at them——"

"After being hit?" interrupted Mr. Billing.

"After being hit," assented the other, "they'll be ashamed of themselves, and it'll hurt them more than if you struck them."

"Let's 'ope so," said the convert; "but it don't sound reasonable. I can hit a man pretty 'ard. Not that I'm bad-tempered, mind you; a bit quick, p'r'aps. And, after all, a good smack in th' jaw saves any amount of argufying."

Mr. Purnip smiled, and, as they walked along, painted a glowing picture of the influence to be wielded by a first-class fighting-man who refused to fight. It was a rough neighbourhood, and he recognized with sorrow that more respect was paid to a heavy fist than to a noble intellect or a loving heart.

"And you combine them all," he said, patting his companion's arm.

Mr. Billing smiled. "You ought to know best," he said, modestly.

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"You'll be surprised to find how easy it is," continued Mr. Purnip. "You will go from strength to strength. Old habits will disappear, and you will hardly know you have lost them. In a few months' time you will probably be wondering what you could ever have seen in beer, for example."

"I thought you said you didn't want me to give up beer?" said the other.

"We don't," said Mr. Purnip. "I mean that as you grow in stature you will simply lose the taste for it."

Mr. Billing came to a sudden full stop. "D'ye mean I shall lose my liking for a drop o' beer without being able to help myself?" he demanded, in an anxious voice.

Mr. Purnip coughed.

"Of course, it doesn't happen in every case," he said, hastily.

Mr. Billing's features relaxed. "Well, let's 'ope I shall be one of the fortunate ones," he said, simply. "I can put up with a good deal, but when it comes to beer——"

"We shall see," said the other, smiling. "We don't want to interfere with anybody's comfort; we want to make them happier, that's all. A little more kindness between man and man; a little more consideration for each other; a little more brightness in dull lives."

He paused at the corner of the street and, with a hearty handshake, went off. Mr. Billing, a prey to somewhat mixed emotions, continued on his way home. The little knot of earnest men and women who had settled in the district to spread light and culture had been angling for him for some time. He wondered, as he walked, what particular bait it was that had done the mischief.

"They've got me at last," he remarked, as he opened the house-door and walked into his small kitchen. "I couldn't say 'no' to Mr. Purnip."

"Wish 'em joy," said Mrs. Billing, briefly. "Did you wipe your boots?"

Her husband turned without a word, and, retreating to the mat, executed a prolonged double-shuffle.

"You needn't wear it out," said the surprised Mrs. Billing.

"We've got to make people 'appier," said her husband, seriously; "be kinder to 'em, and brighten up their dull lives a bit. That's wot Mr. Purnip says."

"You'll brighten 'em up all right," declared Mrs. Billing, with a sniff. "I sha'n't forget last Tuesday week—not if I live to be a hundred. You'd ha' brightened up the police-station if I 'adn't got you home just in the nick of time."

Her husband, who was by this time busy under the scullery-tap, made no reply. He came from it spluttering, and, seizing a small towel, stood in the doorway burnishing his face and regarding his wife with a smile which Mr. Purnip himself could not have surpassed. He sat down to supper, and between bites explained in some detail the lines on which his future life was to be run. As an earnest of good faith, he consented, after a short struggle, to a slip of oilcloth for the passage; a pair of vases for the front room; and a new and somewhat expensive corn-cure for Mrs. Billing.

"And let's 'ope you go on as you've begun," said that gratified lady. "There's something in old Purnip after all. I've been worrying you for months for that oilcloth. Are you going to help me wash up? Mr. Purnip would."

Mr. Billing appeared not to hear, and, taking up his cap, strolled slowly in the direction of the Blue Lion. It was a beautiful summer evening, and his bosom swelled as he thought of the improvements that a little brotherliness might effect in Elk Street. Engrossed in such ideas, it almost hurt him to find that, as he entered one door of the Blue Lion, two gentlemen, forgetting all about their beer, disappeared through the other.

"Wot 'ave they run away like that for?" he demanded, looking round. "I wouldn't hurt 'em."

"Depends on wot you call hurting, Joe," said a friend.

Mr. Billing shook his head. "They've no call to be afraid of me," he said, gravely. "I wouldn't hurt a fly; I've got a new 'art."

"A new wot?" inquired his friend, staring.

"A new 'art," repeated the other. "I've given up fighting and swearing, and drinking too much. I'm going to lead a new life and do all the good I can; I'm going——"

"Glory! Glory!" ejaculated a long, thin youth, who, making a dash for the door, disappeared.

"He'll know me better in time," said Mr. Billing. "Why, I wouldn't hurt a fly. I want to do good to people; not to hurt 'em. I'll have a pint," he added, turning to the bar.

"Not here you won't," said the landlord, eyeing him coldly.

"Why not?" demanded the astonished Mr. Billing.

"You've had all you ought to have already," was the reply. "And there's one thing I'll swear to—you ain't had it 'ere."

"I haven't 'ad a drop pass my lips——" began the outraged Mr. Billing.

"Yes, I know," said the other, wearily, as he shifted one or two glasses and wiped the counter; "I've heard it all before, over and over again. Mind you, I've been in this business thirty years, and if I don't know when a man's had his whack, and a drop more, nobody does. You get off 'ome and ask your missis to make you a nice cup o' good strong tea, and then get up to bed and sleep it off."

"I dare say," said Mr. Billing, with cold dignity, as he paused at the door—"I dare say I may give up beer altogether."

He stood outside pondering over the unforeseen difficulties attendant upon his new career, moving a few inches to one side as Mr. Ricketts, a foe of long standing, came towards the public-house and, halting a yard or two away, eyed him warily.

"Come along," said Mr. Billing, speaking somewhat loudly, for the benefit of the men in the bar; "I sha'n't hurt you; my fighting days are over."

"Yes, I dessay," replied the other, edging away.

"It's all right, Bill," said a mutual friend, through the half-open door; "he's got a new 'art."

Mr. Ricketts looked perplexed. "'Art disease, d'ye mean?" he inquired, hopefully. "*Can't* he fight no more?"

"A new 'art," said Mr. Billing. "It's as strong as ever it was, but it's changed—brother."

"If you call me 'brother' agin I'll give you something for yourself, and chance it," said Mr. Ricketts, ferociously. "I'm a pore man, but I've got my pride."

Mr. Billing, with a smile charged with brotherly love, leaned his left cheek towards him. "Hit it," he said, gently.

"Give it a smack and run, Bill," said the voice of a well-wisher inside.

"There'd be no need for 'im to run," said Mr. Billing. "I wouldn't hit 'im back for anything. I should turn the other cheek."

"Whaffor?" inquired the amazed Mr. Ricketts.

"For another swipe," said Mr. Billing, radiantly.

In the fraction of a second he got the first, and reeled back staggering. The onlookers from the bar came out hastily. Mr. Ricketts, somewhat pale, stood his ground.

"You see, I don't hit you," said Mr. Billing, with a ghastly attempt at a smile.

He stood rubbing his cheek gently, and, remembering Mr. Purnip's statements, slowly, inch by inch, turned the other in the direction of his adversary. The circuit was still incomplete when Mr. Ricketts, balancing himself carefully, fetched it a smash that nearly burst it. Mr. Billing, somewhat jarred by his contact with the pavement, rose painfully and confronted him.

"I've only got two cheeks, mind," he said, slowly.

Mr. Ricketts sighed. "I wish you'd got a blinking dozen," he said, wistfully. "Well, so long. Be good."

He walked into the Blue Lion absolutely free from that sense of shame which Mr. Purnip had predicted, and, accepting a pint from an admirer, boasted noisily of his exploit. Mr. Billing, suffering both mentally and physically, walked slowly home to his astonished wife.

"P'r'aps he'll be ashamed of hisself when 'e comes to think it over," he murmured, as Mrs. Billing, rendered almost perfect by practice, administered first aid.

"I s'pect he's crying his eyes out," she said, with a sniff. "Tell me if that 'urts."

Mr. Billing told her, then, suddenly remembering himself, issued an expurgated edition.

"I'm sorry for the next man that 'its you," said his wife, as she drew back and regarded her handiwork.

"Well, you needn't be," said Mr. Billing, with dignity. "It would take more than a couple o' props in the jaw to make me alter my mind when I've made it up. You ought to know that by this time. Hurry up and finish. I want you to go to the corner and fetch me a pot."

"What, ain't you going out agin?" demanded his astonished wife.

Mr. Billing shook his head. "Somebody else might want to give me one," he said, resignedly, "and I've 'ad about all I want to-night."

His face was still painful next morning, but as he sat at breakfast in the small kitchen he was able to refer to Mr. Ricketts in terms which were an eloquent testimony to Mr. Purnip's teaching. Mrs. Billing, unable to contain herself, wandered off into the front room with a duster.

"Are you nearly ready to go?" she inquired, returning after a short interval.

"Five minutes," said Mr. Billing, nodding. "I'll just light my pipe and then I'm off."

"'Cos there's two or three waiting outside for you," added his wife.

Mr. Billing rose. "Ho, is there?" he said, grimly, as he removed his coat and proceeded to roll up his shirt-sleeves. "I'll learn 'em. I'll give 'em something to wait for. I'll——"

His voice died away as he saw the triumph in his wife's face, and, drawing down his sleeves again, he took up his coat and stood eyeing her in genuine perplexity.

"Tell 'em I've gorn," he said, at last.

"And what about telling lies?" demanded his wife. "What would your Mr. Purnip say to that?"

"You do as you're told," exclaimed the harassed Mr. Billing. "*I'm* not going to tell 'em; it's you."

Mrs. Billing returned to the parlour, and, with Mr. Billing lurking in the background, busied herself over a china flower-pot that stood in the window, and turned an anxious eye upon three men waiting outside. After a glance or two she went to the door.

"Did you want to see my husband?" she inquired.

The biggest of the three nodded. "Yus," he said, shortly.

"I'm sorry," said Mrs. Billing, "but he 'ad to go early this morning. Was it anything partikler?"

"Gorn?" said the other, in disappointed tones. "Well, you tell 'im I'll see 'im later on."

He turned away and, followed by the other two, walked slowly up the road. Mr. Billing, after waiting till the coast was clear, went off in the other direction.

He sought counsel of his friend and mentor that afternoon, and stood beaming with pride at the praise lavished upon him. Mr. Purnip's co-workers were no less enthusiastic than their chief; and various suggestions were made to Mr. Billing as to his behaviour in the unlikely event of further attacks upon his noble person.

He tried to remember the suggestions in the harassing days that followed; baiting Joe Billing becoming popular as a pastime from which no evil results need be feared.

"FLYING UP THE ROAD HOTLY PURSUED BY A FOEMAN HALF HIS SIZE."

It was creditable to his fellow-citizens that most of them refrained from violence with a man who declined to hit back, but as a butt his success was assured. The night when a gawky lad of eighteen drank up his beer, and then invited him to step outside if he didn't like it, dwelt long in his memory. And Elk Street thrilled one evening at the sight of their erstwhile champion flying up the road hotly pursued by a foeman half his size. His explanation to his indignant wife that, having turned the other cheek the night before, he was in no mood for further punishment, was received in chilling silence.

"They'll soon get tired of it," he said, hopefully; "and I ain't going to be beat by a lot of chaps wot I could lick with one 'and tied behind me. They'll get to understand in time; Mr. Purnip says so. It's a pity that you don't try and do some good yourself."

Mrs. Billing received the suggestion with a sniff; but the seed was sown. She thought the matter over in private, and came to the conclusion that, if her husband wished her to participate in good works, it was not for her to deny him. Hitherto her efforts in that direction had been promptly suppressed; Mr. Billing's idea being that if a woman looked after her home and her husband properly there should be neither time nor desire for anything else. His surprise on arriving home to tea on Saturday afternoon, and finding a couple of hard-working neighbours devouring his substance, almost deprived him of speech.

"Poor things," said his wife, after the guests had gone; "they did enjoy it. It's cheered 'em up wonderful. You and Mr. Purnip are quite right. I can see that now. You can tell him that it was you what put it into my 'art."

"Me? Why, I never dreamt o' such a thing," declared the surprised Mr. Billing. "And there's other ways of doing good besides asking a pack of old women in to tea."

"I know there is," said his wife. "All in good time," she added, with a far-away look in her eyes.

Mr. Billing cleared his throat, but nothing came of it. He cleared it again.

"I couldn't let you do all the good," said his wife, hastily. "It wouldn't be fair. I must help."

Mr. Billing lit his pipe noisily, and then took it out into the back-yard and sat down to think over the situation. The ungenerous idea that his wife was making goodness serve her own ends was the first that occurred to him.

His suspicions increased with time. Mrs. Billing's good works seemed to be almost entirely connected with hospitality. True, she had entertained Mr. Purnip and one of the ladies from the Settlement to tea, but that only riveted his bonds more firmly. Other visitors included his sister-in-law, for whom he had a great distaste, and some of the worst-behaved children in the street.

"It's only high spirits," said Mrs. Billing; "all children are like that. And I do it to help the mothers."

"And 'cos you like children," said her husband, preserving his good-humour with an effort.

There was a touch of monotony about the new life, and the good deeds that accompanied it, which, to a man of ardent temperament, was apt to pall. And Elk Street, instead of giving him the credit which was his due, preferred to ascribe the change in his behaviour to what they called being "a bit barmy on the crumpet."

He came home one evening somewhat dejected, brightening up as he stood in the passage and inhaled the ravishing odours from the kitchen. Mrs. Billing, with a trace of nervousness somewhat unaccountable in view of the excellent quality of the repast provided, poured him out a glass of beer, and passed flattering comment upon his appearance.

"Wot's the game?" he inquired.

"Game?" repeated his wife, in a trembling voice. "Nothing. 'Ow do you find that steak-pudding? I thought of giving you one every Wednesday."

Mr. Billing put down his knife and fork and sat regarding her thoughtfully. Then he pushed back his chair suddenly and, a picture of consternation and wrath, held up his hand for silence.

"W-w-wot is it?" he demanded. "A cat?"

Mrs. Billing made no reply, and her husband sprang to his feet as a long, thin wailing sounded through the house. A note of temper crept into it and strengthened it.

"*Wot is it?*" demanded Mr. Billing again.

"It's—it's Mrs. Smith's Charlie," stammered his wife.

"In—in *my* bedroom?" exclaimed her husband, in incredulous accents. "Wot's it doing there?"

"I took it for the night," said his wife, hurriedly. "Poor thing, what with the others being ill she's 'ad a dreadful time,

and she said if I'd take Charlie for a few —for a night, she might be able to get some sleep."

Mr. Billing choked. "And wot about my sleep?" he shouted. "Chuck it outside at once. D'ye hear me?"

His words fell on empty air, his wife having already sped upstairs to pacify Master Smith by a rhythmical and monotonous thumping on the back. Also she lifted up a thin and not particularly sweet voice and sang to him. Mr. Billing, finishing his supper in indignant silence, told himself grimly that he was "beginning to have enough of it."

He spent the evening at the Charlton Arms, and, returning late, went slowly and heavily up to bed. In the light of a shaded candle he saw a small, objectionable-looking infant fast asleep on two chairs by the side of the bed.

"*H'sh!*" said his wife, in a thrilling whisper. "He's just gone off."

"D'ye mean I mustn't open my mouth in my own bedroom?" demanded the indignant man, loudly.

"*H'sh!*" said his wife again.

It was too late. Master Smith, opening first one eye and then the other, finished by opening his mouth. The noise was appalling.

"*H'sh! H'sh!*" repeated Mrs. Billing, as her husband began to add to the noise. "Don't wake 'im right up."

"Right up?" repeated the astonished man. "*Right up?* Why, is he doing this in 'is sleep?"

He subsided into silence and, undressing with stealthy care, crept into bed and lay there, marvelling at his self-control. He was a sound sleeper, but six times at least he was awakened by Mrs. Billing slipping out of bed—regardless of draughts to her liege lord—and marching up and down the room with the visitor in her arms. He rose in the morning and dressed in ominous silence.

"I 'ope he didn't disturb you," said his wife, anxiously.

"You've done it," replied Mr. Billing. "You've upset everything now. Since I joined the Purnip lot everybody's took advantage of me; now I'm going to get some of my own back. You wouldn't ha' dreamt of behaving like this a few weeks ago."

"Oh, Joe!" said his wife, entreatingly; "and everybody's been so happy!"

"Except me," retorted Joe Billing. "You come down and get my breakfast ready. If I start early I shall catch Mr. Bill Ricketts on 'is way to work. And mind, if I find that steam-orgin 'ere when I come 'ome to-night you'll hear of it."

He left the house with head erect and the light of battle in his eyes, and, meeting Mr. Ricketts at the corner, gave that justly aggrieved gentleman the surprise of his life. Elk Street thrilled to the fact that Mr. Billing had broken out again, and spoke darkly of what the evening might bring forth. Curious eyes followed his progress as he returned home from work, and a little later on the news was spread abroad that he was out and paying off old scores with an ardour that nothing could withstand.

"And wot about your change of 'art?" demanded one indignant matron, as her husband reached home five seconds ahead of Mr. Billing and hid in the scullery.

"It's changed agin," said Mr. Billing, simply.

He finished the evening in the Blue Lion, where he had one bar almost to himself, and, avoiding his wife's reproachful glance when he arrived home, procured some warm water and began to bathe his honourable scars.

"Mr. Purnip 'as been round with another gentleman," said his wife.

Mr. Billing said "Oh!"

"Very much upset they was, and 'ope you'll go and see them," she continued.

Mr. Billing said "Oh!" again; and, after thinking the matter over, called next day at the Settlement and explained his position.

"It's all right for gentlemen like you," he said, civilly. "But a man like me can't call his soul 'is own—or even 'is bedroom. Everybody takes advantage of 'im. Nobody ever gives *you* a punch, and, as for putting babies in your bedroom, they wouldn't dream of it."

He left amid expressions of general regret, turning a deaf ear to all suggestions about making another start, and went off exulting in his freedom.

His one trouble was Mr. Purnip, that estimable gentleman, who seemed to have a weird gift of meeting him at all sorts of times and places, never making any allusion to his desertion, but showing quite clearly by his manner that he still hoped for the return of the wanderer. It was awkward for a man of sensitive disposition, and Mr. Billing, before entering a street, got into the habit of peering round the corner first.

He pulled up suddenly one evening as he saw his tenacious friend, accompanied by a lady-member, some little distance ahead.

Then he sprang forward with fists clenched as a passer-by, after scowling at Mr. Purnip, leaned forward and deliberately blew a mouthful of smoke into the face of his companion.

Mr. Billing pulled up suddenly and stood gaping with astonishment. The aggressor was getting up from the pavement, while Mr. Purnip, in an absolutely correct attitude,

"I'm ashamed of myself," he murmured, brokenly—"ashamed."

"Ashamed!" exclaimed the amazed Mr. Billing. "Why, a pro couldn't ha' done better."

"Such an awful example," moaned the other. "All my good work here thrown away."

"ONE OF THE BEST FIGHTS THAT HAD EVER BEEN SEEN IN THE DISTRICT."

stood waiting for him. Mr. Billing in a glow of delight edged forward, and, with a few other fortunates, stood by watching one of the best fights that had ever been seen in the district. Mr. Purnip's foot-work was excellent, and the way he timed his blows made Mr. Billing's eyes moist with admiration.

It was over at last. The aggressor went limping off, and Mr. Purnip, wiping his bald head, picked up his battered and dusty hat from the roadway and brushed it on his sleeve. He turned with a blush to meet the delighted gaze of Mr. Billing.

"Don't you believe it, sir," said Mr. Billing, earnestly. "As soon as this gets about you'll get more members than you want a'most. I'm coming back, for one."

Mr. Purnip turned and grasped his hand.

"I understand things now," said Mr. Billing, nodding sagely. "Turning the other cheek's all right so long as you don't do it always. If you don't let 'em know whether you are going to turn the other cheek or knock their blessed heads off, it's all right. 'Arf the trouble in the world is caused by people knowing too much."

Sherlock Holmes Next Month!

WHAT WILL ENGLAND BE LIKE IN 1930?

The Opinions of Sir A. Conan Doyle, Mr. H. G. Wells, and other eminent and representative men in various walks of life.

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

IT is a fascinating problem which you suggest, and one upon which one would not dare to be dogmatic. In the energetic hours of a great war one imagines that the same energy will be carried on into peace days and great reforms effected. I fear that the lesson of history is just the opposite. Lethargy and exhaustion follow upon great national exertions. After the Napoleonic wars, from 1815 onwards no internal event of outstanding importance occurred until the Reform Bill of 1832.

It is true, on the other hand, that there is a spiritual quality in this war, and that men's minds and souls have been moved as never before. This may give us after-results. These will depend upon the extent of our victory. If it is incomplete and Germany is left in vindictive mood, with her present rulers still in power, then the military situation will predominate, and conditions remain very hard for all classes. If, on the other hand, we win to such a point that we can safely reduce our military expenses to a minimum, we shall, in spite of our crippling debt, be able to effect something in the way of social reform. The money saved from the fighting services should give us enough to increase the present old-age pensions, which are too low, to encourage education on a large scale, to subsidize scientific research, and to deal with the whole subject of poverty and disease in a drastic fashion. Education must be of character rather than of mere learning, for Germany has shown us during these dreadful days that the possession of knowledge, when it is unbalanced by character, turns a modern man into the most dangerous type of savage that the world has ever seen. A well-balanced education of a democratic type will carry with it the seeds of temperance and sexual restraint. You must prepare the soil carefully before you can get such results. Then they will come of themselves.

I hope that temperance legislation may take the form of regulating the strength of the intoxicant. Light beers and wines give a variety to life and can do no harm. I would, however, rather see total prohibition than the state of things which existed before the war. Some great change will surely have come before 1930.

Some form of profit-sharing or co-operation will be earnestly called for between Labour and Capital. The weak point of the demands of Labour is that they never refer to the countless instances when the Capital is invested and lost. If they share profits, then it is clear that they should share losses, and the two may well balance each other. However, some working agreement must be attained, or the country will be convulsed by never-ending troubles.

Ireland should be a loyal part of the Empire before 1930. It might well have been so now but for the rising of the Sinn-Feiners. Before 1930 one would hope that every Irishman would realize that such agitations do little harm to the Empire, but are fatal to the peace and prosperity of Ireland. Home Rule all round is sure to come, but whether it can be attained by 1930 is very doubtful.

On the religious side of life I have already expressed my views when commenting upon those of Sir Oliver Lodge. The tendency will be to get at the roots of religion, to cast away the forms and formulæ, and to believe in deeds rather than in dogmas. At the same time there will be an increasing demand for positive proofs of supernatural interference, and an acceptance of the fact that the age of inspiration and of revelation is not a dead historical thing, but is with us even now.

Of mechanical improvements I am not competent to speak. The war, however, has given an immense impetus to the submarine and to the airship. It is evident that the latter is destined to compete with the railways for passenger traffic in the future, and that submarine merchantmen will escape the dangers of stormy weather, so long as they are in the broad, deep oceans. I believe that, taking the history of the last twenty years, we have, in spite of some ameliorating influences, lived in the most wicked epoch of the world's history; so that all changes are likely to be for the better.

Arthur Conan Doyle.

DR. C. W. SALEEBY.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

THE war is costing us the lives of hundreds of thousands of our best in mind and body. In losing them we lose the fathers of the future. The next generation will be born of fathers inferior as a whole to those whom the war has taken. This is what I call the *dysgenics* of war—the reverse of eugenics, which is the choice of the best to be the parents of the future. In thus paying the longest price of war we offer the true and tragic reply to the infamous lie of Bernhardi, that aggressive war is the duty of a strong nation, on the principle of the survival of the fittest, and is justified and demanded by this principle of Darwin. In direct contradiction to the German bully, the humane and noble Englishman whose name he maligns taught, as Benjamin Franklin had taught before him, that war is dreadful above all, because it is, as I have said, dysgenic.

May we hope for anything, as an outcome or by-product of the war, which will compensate us for this direct injury to our racial quality? Indeed we can. For such hope we must turn to the other sex. Neither Franklin nor Darwin, curiously enough, noted the important fact, upon which I commented more than two years ago in my Chadwick lectures, that the "reversed selection" of war spares the mothers—who are, after all, the more important parents of the two. If this war should somehow lead to better conditions for motherhood, it might even become a racial blessing in disguise.

But, indeed, that is happening. We are now caring for babies, and for their mothers, who are the natural saviours of babies, as never before. This year's "Baby Week," well chosen to be the first week of the third quarter of the year, when babies die so quickly if no one cares about them, will be an annual function. Soon we shall be saving the thousand babies a week whom, as Lord Rhondda declared months ago, we can save when we please. In doing so, we shall avert the damage otherwise done to far more babies still. Rickets, due to bad feeding of infancy and childhood, a wholly preventable malady which Continental nations call the "English disease," would soon be no more seen. The beneficent results in the physique and happiness of the next generation of citizens will be a strange but blessed result of this war.

The injurious results of alcohol, especially in the form of spirits, upon health, in the matter of resistance to disease, such as consumption, and in relation to motherhood, showed their worst in 1915, the blackest year in modern history—ghastly centenary year of Waterloo. Since then immense improvement has been wrought, notably contributing to the fact that infant mortality in 1916, alike in England and Wales and Scotland, was by far the lowest ever recorded. We shall never go back to the pre-war or 1915 state of things in this respect. Never again shall we drink so much spirits, nor such strong spirits, nor any alcoholic liquors during so many hours of the twenty-four. Thus, as a strange result of the war, the whole standard of public health and efficiency will be permanently raised.

C. W. Saleeby

FATHER BERNARD VAUGHAN.

Photo. R. Haines.

YOU honour me, but I am no prophet, and could not venture to feature England in 1930. It seems to me that we are up against a most tremendous proposition, when forces may possibly arise to shatter all our hopes. Our destiny, the destiny of the Empire, is in the hollow of the working-man's hand, and unless his interests become Imperial he may imperil the outlook of our Empire—nay, he may possibly socialize it out of all recognition. The hand-worker has become invested with terrific political power, and he has yet to be trained in the right use of it. Meanwhile he receives little help and advice from those in high places, for they are all afraid of him. Instead of telling him of his faults, political leaders offer him incense only. Like young wine, the hand-worker, inflated with new forces, may burst through that measure of self-restraint needed to fit him to be a wise ruler.

It is the after-war bunch of propositions of which I am so much afraid. A brand-new series of industrial and social questions will have to be faced, and who will be the man to solve them for the salvation of the Empire? Of course, one hopes for the best and puts one's trust in the strong common sense of one's country-folk; but there is set up against our most ardent hopes possibilities which may disappoint them rudely and utterly.

Moreover, I very much fear the country has broken away from the restraints of dogmatic religion; and without some such clearly-defined religion how are men to bring their beastly passions to heel, and stand in the rear of their illegitimate aspirations? Lay morality may serve its purpose when the heavens are serene and the sky is cloudless, but, under stress and storm of temptation and soul-tempest, lay morality will no more stand erect without dogma than a line of sweet-peas without its props.

The England of 1930 will be what my friend the wage-earner makes it. If we educate him without the strong arm of God to lean on and the great Heart of God to draw upon, we may expect reeds broken in the rough storm of life. The weapon of knowledge is too dangerous an instrument to place in the hands of the rising generation without the voice of God to direct it. We want to drill an army to hold up and defend our Empire, not to arm a mob to pull it down and bring it to naught.

Bernard Vaughan

MR.. OSWALD STOLL.

Photo. C. Harris.

WHAT will England be like in 1930? Who knows? Between now and then we shall keep on doing things, reaching some temporary ends, perhaps rightly, perhaps wrongly, good ends, bad and indifferent ones, according as we are directed or buffeted by circumstances, or as we direct ourselves, collectively, through our representative government, or individually.

If without compensating financial concessions the Government takes from the many by inevitable £500,000,000 annual Budgets the means whereby they might live and prosper, and hands over these vast sums to the comparatively few in the process of reducing a quota of our £4,000,000,000 of War Debt, England will be a hard place to live in. The few resting on their laurels will invest their funds in income-producing securities throughout the world. The country will be gradually depleted of great factories and engaged commercially in the shipping of our choicest raw materials abroad for productive use elsewhere. From a decreasing population, the vigorous youth, with their spirit of enterprise, will go to newer lands where work will pay better, where the burden of War Debt will not compel the Government to take so much of their earnings, where living will therefore be easier, the rearing of a family a pleasure, and enterprise bring reward as well as responsibilities.

If compensating financial concessions are made, not by the Government direct to the people, but through the bottle-neck of a private corporation, like the British Trade Bank Corporation, which is the method just instituted by the Government on the recommendation of "expert" financiers, the outlook may be brighter to such an extent and no more as that small coterie of men may deem expedient. This coterie may be well-intentioned and far-seeing. But human

nature is frail and has limitations. Two heads are better than one, we know, and a dozen heads may be better than two. But why restrain development to accord with the views of even a dozen bright men? Tolls upon roads are out of date. A toll upon the road to prosperity, to be paid to a dozen men by forty-five million people, is in truth but a new tax to be paid for the privilege of earning the wherewithal to pay these Budgets of £500,000,000 per annum; and one which will have the stultifying influence of all tolls.

But if the compensating financial concessions are to be provided by the Government in such way that the people who have security to give may demand them as a right, undertaking to employ them for productive purposes alone, then production will abound, the means to consume will multiply, the demand for labour will solve all problems of wages and employment, freedom to finance will inaugurate freedom to trade, to pay our debts, to live and to prosper, for financial oligarchy will have given place to financial democracy.

Oswald Stoll

MR. E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

YOU have asked me to give my opinion, but it is extremely difficult to make a forecast, because the war is still with us with all its attendant horrors and derangements, and no one can say how it will end. Nevertheless, there are many significant signs of the times which show a definite trend towards certain developments which can hardly be diverted from their inevitable fulfilment.

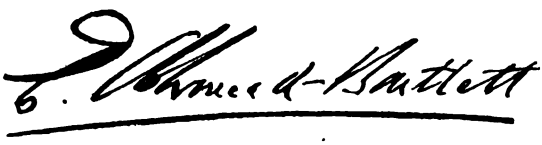
England herself will occupy, I think, a relatively less important position in the firmament of Empire. She will remain the centre or heart of our vast system of free democracies, but the Dominions will have a far greater share in the vital decisions which affect the whole Empire, not only on account of the *rôle* they have played in the war, but also because the balance of wealth and of population will have largely shifted to the outlying portions of our Empire. In 1930 Parliament will surely be decentralized, and we shall have an Imperial Assembly, which will meet once annually to deal with all Imperial questions. This Assembly will, I hope, be chosen by selection from the various existing Constitutional Assemblies, with the power of adding eminent men who may not be actually members of any elected House. A permanent Committee will be maintained in London.

In spite of Mr. Wells, I believe the Monarchy will still be with us, for the very excellent reasons I shall not reiterate which were laid down by General Smuts in his admirable address. But it will not be exactly the Monarchy we know now. It will have to be brought up to date and shorn of a great many useless forms and formulas. The bed of weeds which has grown up round the Throne almost conceals the central symbolic figure from view. The snobbishness must go and the antiquated etiquette must be modified. The personal entourage of the King should be chosen from the very best brains in the country, whose duty it will be, not as in the past to stand as a barrier against the unwelcome inroads of democracy, but to bring the King and his people into closer touch.

Then there is the question of selecting Queens in the future. I think we shall see in 1930 a lady of Anglo-Saxon birth as the prospective queen-consort. I hope in 1930 the Prince of Wales will be a General. Why is he still a captain, engaged on some petty job, when the German princes are commanding armies, and making their personalities known for better or for worse throughout the world?

Perhaps the gravest issue of 1930 will be the feminist one. If we go on losing men at the present rate in our efforts to pierce the Hindenburg line, and if the war lasts another year, we shall have reduced the vitality of our man-power to deplorable lengths. Meanwhile, the brain-power and independence of the female sex is ever increasing, and man is being displaced. Thus for some years after the war the balance will not be restored, and we shall go through a period of freak legislation and social restrictions which will render life almost unbearable. But about 1930 a younger generation of mankind will be reaching maturity, and I think we shall see the great counter-attack of man against woman to get back his lost ascendancy, and also to check what is known in Australia as "Wowserism" ("Wowser," imitation of a street cur baying the moon), the most dreadful and depressing fate that can fall on any free community.

We shall not know England in 1930 as we knew her before the war. Happy-go-lucky, irresponsible, with the divergent political elements ever quarrelling in public, but generally ready to meet at a dinner-table, a fancy-dress ball, or a private party. In 1930 we shall be lifted out of ourselves, so to speak. In 1930 we shall have learnt the relative importance of domestic, foreign, and Imperial questions. We shall be saner, but life will have lost much of its old charm. Democracy does not make for the comfort of the few at the expense of the many. With the smashing of the Huns, the last barrier of servitude, both national and domestic, is swept away. The Servant Question will become acute, and the housewife will live to curse the day that discipline was destroyed in the cause of liberty. For years we shall groan under almost unbearable taxation. Old family estates will have to be broken up. I think the law of primogeniture will go, and small estates will become the order of the day. Marriage laws will have to be changed if we are to get back our lost population. Sport and pleasure will be modified. We shall find ourselves in a world of realities made absolutely necessary by the awful strain imposed on us by the war. All the old trappings of mediævalism will have disappeared. Titles will be limited to those who have performed some great service to the State. The highest positions in the Government round the Throne will be open to merit alone and to the competition of the entire nation.



GENERAL SIR ALFRED E. TURNER.

Photo. E. H. Mills.

ENGLAND in thirteen years' time! It will take at least five years for the country to regain its normal condition. No accessions of territory are sought by us, and none are required. The war has been, and will continue to be, a great leveller, and at its conclusion we shall have up to 1930 and onwards a fusion of classes, due to men of all ranks fighting for years shoulder to shoulder and facing death together. The war is a terrible furnace, but British steel is being forged through it which will make England greater than ever. When the vast Army comes home, it will know how to deal with the ignoble and traitorous pacifists, the cowardly conscientious objectors, and the pro-Germans, and these will have to hide their diminished heads for ever. Never again must we be caught napping; had we been prepared for war the insolent braggart of Germany would not have dared to go to war. We must have a National Army, which will be our bulwark against the attack of an infamous Germany again. There is all that is good and nothing that is bad in national service, and Lord Roberts, who was abused and gibed at by miserable and dishonest politicians, was but too right when he warned the Government and people that Germany would strike when she felt her hour had come. In 1930 we shall, then, have a National Army, in which every sound young man will have to serve. This alone, by bringing all classes together, will keep down the luxury, ostentation, the hypocrisy and snobbishness, which have been far too much in vogue in England. It is too much to hope that our political system will be reformed; it is most pitiful for a great Empire like ours. As Carlyle somewhat too strongly put it once to Lord Wolseley, "It is indeed a sad thing that this great Empire should be governed by six hundred talking jackasses at Westminster."

Finally, our Monarchy in 1930 will be as firm as ever. Some silly persons have been talking lately of the Republic they say we ought to have. If we were ever mad enough to listen to such pernicious rubbish India and the Colonies would break away from the Mother Country, and rightly so. Royalty is the keystone of the Empire; take it away, and the Empire falls into pieces. The Maharajah of Bikanir expressed his views very strongly on this subject during his late visit to us. The attitude of our King and Queen during the war has been perfect; the Prince of Wales has endeared himself to the whole Army, with whom he has shared their perils and hardships. He has shown the highest qualities and a total absence of "side." Woe be to those self-seeking demagogues who aim at the institution of a Republic in Great Britain! The Army, now no small voluntary force but a national one, will know how to deal with them. In short, in 1930 the Monarchy will be firmer established than ever in the hearts of the people; the country will have a great National Army; there will be great sympathy

between different classes of the people, and pacifists, strike-promoters, conscientious objectors, and the internal enemies of England, so rampant now even in Parliament, will have disappeared, or will be afraid to show themselves as such.

This will have been the result of this terrible war with its awful toll from the flower of the youth and manhood of the Empire. But these precious lives will not have been sacrificed in vain; for, in the first place, owing to them, the most infamous tyranny of Germany, the worst the world ever saw, will have been crushed, and England, purged through the fiery ordeal of the war, will be in 1930 less pleasure-seeking, more serious, and more conscious of the responsibility which rests upon every Briton to preserve the integrity and safety of our glorious Empire.

Agnes S. Turnbull

REV. ROBERT F. HORTON, M.A., D.D.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

A COUNTRY governed by its whole adult population, men and women, a population which has at last realized the supreme value of a genuine Education, and has set itself to this one task first (as before the deluge the one task was to make and to accumulate money), to train every child, physically, mentally, and morally, to develop all its social and serviceable possibilities. In 1930 England has learned several things from the war, which she, in common with the other nations, is seeking to realize. She has at last learned that the word Democracy, which she once scorned and loathed, means the union of all nations and men in a genuine human family. She has seen that military and naval preparations, to serve a nationalist individualism, lead inevitably to a disaster, which must become worse as the area of the civilized world increases. Accordingly she, in concert with the other nations, is seeking security for herself, and a proper development of her powers and resources, by cultivating cordial relations and a spirit of co-operation with other nations. The broken Prussian idol, which was demolished in the war, has left the kindred Teutonic peoples to be the foremost in this great Truce of God.

She has seen also what could be done by a State organized for war, and by the use of the wealth of individuals for a common end; and she has therefore applied the principle of organization, and employment of the nation's wealth for the nation's good, to a carefully-conceived plan of social reform and internal development. The keynote of public life is "an equal chance for all," and while no individual is extravagantly rich, none is degradingly poor. The distribution of wealth is no longer an impossible desideratum, but a progressive achievement.

Robert F. Horton

THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM.

Photo. R. Haines.

WHAT *should* England be like in 1930 if the lessons of this great time in history are not neglected?

England should be a really federated Empire, with all branches sharing in its management. The vision of a great central Parliament, dealing only with affairs of Imperial moment, should be realized through the union that has grown up during the war.

We here at home have learnt the value of the Dominions beyond the seas. Those Dominions have had deepened within them their affection for the old Motherland, and they realize the grandeur of an Empire in which each associated country is free in all its internal management, and yet in which every part is prepared to live and die for the common whole.

It is obvious that if such a vision is to be realized, Parliament, as at present constituted, will have to make some fresh arrangements as to local matters. The congested condition of our Lower House at present prevents well-considered legislation from being carried through. Home Rule within the Empire must in some way or other be accomplished.

England in 1930 should have employer and employed working in hearty co-operation. The

war has taught us that the promotion of the well-being of those who have made any contract the one with the other should be the care of all concerned. The wiser men on the side of Capital and the side of Labour know that to be dissociated the one from the other means the injury of both.

England in 1930 should, socially, be a land in which those who desired to live luxurious lives should receive the contempt of their fellows. We have learnt that slackness, indifference, self-pleasing, are curses in citizenship. The cumberers of the ground must be uprooted. Democracy must be a real thing, beloved by all, and its teachings practised by all. The fear which is in some of our hearts is lest, after the war, with all its energy and devotion, people should revert to languor; and it is against this danger that active steps will have, no doubt, to be taken.

England in 1930 should, religiously, be a country in which all the expressions of Christianity should be moved by the desire to combine for the promotion of the general good. No one need desire to change the individuality of any Christian believer, and to cramp him in regard to the details which he may cherish, but we shall never have a nation moved in its corporate action by high spiritual motives so long as there is wrangling between the various sects. The opportunity of the Church is going to be magnificent, and if it will take the lead in bringing together all denominations for the common service of the whole land it will produce, even by 1930, a nobler nation than our beloved country has ever been.

H. R. Birmingham

MR. H. G. WELLS.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

WHAT will Great Britain be like in 1930? That is a tremendous challenge to the guessing mind. It depends, as indeed the whole future of the world depends, upon the ideas that prevail in the peace settlement that must come somewhen before the end of next year. These are creative days. What men have the courage to think and decide to-day will become hard fact for centuries ahead. And there are two main sets of ideas struggling for predominance now in men's minds, one of which leads plainly to human welfare and the other to an ever more destructive struggle for life. The first group looks to a sinking of private interests in public service and to a sinking of national sovereignty in some form of world-unity, a League of Nations, the United States of the World, the World Kingdom of God; there are many such phrases, ringing the changes on the one central idea of world-unity. With it go naturally ideas of universal (not partial) free trade, of a world control of shipping, of a world control of natural resources and the like. With it, too, go ideas of universal education, of that universal participation in the ideas of government which is called "democracy," and of a universal sharing of the burthen of labour. On the other hand is the second group of ideas, ideas of national jealousy, of suspicious sovereignty, of the cut-throat competition of peoples and races, of loyalty to little monarchies and traditions, tyranny over "inferior" peoples, discipline for "labour," and disloyalty to mankind. Many of us British seem to be tremendously obsessed by a narrow conception of our so-called "Empire" and by the idea of making it into a close system, knit by high tariffs and financial and transit manipulation, against the outer world. That is the path of death. If we broaden our views from "Empire" to "League," then in 1930 we may be, with our American kindred, with the Latins and the Russians, leading mankind into a new age. The world may be already largely disarmed; it may have recovered altogether from the vast wastes and exertions of these war years; it may be such a scene of hopeful activity and human happiness as only Utopians have dreamt of hitherto. But if we cling to the old mean Imperialist dream, then the "British Empire" in 1930, heavily armed, heavily ruled, monstrously taxed, and with exasperating tariffs and maddening obstacles stuck in the path of every other State's prosperity, will be drifting towards the *rôle* that German militarist Imperialism plays to-day, as an intolerable nuisance to mankind. Internationalism or Imperialism; these are the alternatives. I, myself, am far too deeply involved in these disputes to be able to guess which side is winning. But it is plain which side I want to win.

H. G. Wells

DO NOT MISS THIS THRILLING STORY OF ROMANCE AND ADVENTURE IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

The Temporary Heir.

By JOHN FLEMING WILSON.

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

APTAIN EZRA AMES slowly realized that he was awake; it was not a nightmare that held his great limbs immovable and constricted his chest until each breath was an achievement. He recognized his surroundings—the shanty wall of rough planks with glimmering cracks, the roof overhead of corrugated sheet-iron, the greenish glass of a lamp bowl on the rickety table; above all he knew the rank, soapy smell of the copra stored in the next room. This was no dream. He was dying.

"Paralyzed!" he thought, unterrified. He attempted to move his head. At first he fancied he had succeeded. When he was sure he had not, he took up the difficult business of breathing once more. Captain Ames, who had never yet called himself beaten, was not going to yield to death until he had finished his business. And on the very eve of his accomplishment he was suddenly arrested by the cold hand of Death. He could not personally enjoy the victor's triumph. He must send a messenger into the promised land which he was not to see.

He wondered who it would be who was to come and find him dying. Peterson, his dauntless, soulless lieutenant? Wilks, his cringing slave? Or would it be, after all, Hendricks?

The tropic sun flooded the bare room with yellow light; the open doorway was a blinding oblong to his dimming eyes. He waited patiently, enduring the pain of the glare, because he knew that when the opening was closed by a shadow his watch would be ended, and he would be aware who it was to whom he was to confide his final piece of business—and the girl.

So, wondering which of the three Fate would bring first to his door, he composed himself.

When the opening was obscured, Captain Ames knew who it was who was entering. No one but Hendricks would have dared come in without a preliminary question or excuse.

The new-comer merely glanced at the bulky form on the cot and stepped boldly across the room to a cupboard. The key hung in the lock. He opened it and drank heartily out of a bottle. Then he turned and met Ames's glance. For a minute the two men, as of old, fought for the mastery, but it was Captain Ames who now closed his eyes, in spite of himself. When he opened them again, he saw that Hendricks understood something had happened.

Ames carefully framed the word, "Dying!"

The other bent over him thoughtfully, not at all surprised. Then he remarked casually, "Paralyzed!"

"Dying!," the Captain repeated, irascibly, fearing that his utterance might fail him. But Hendrick sseemed to catch the word perfectly, and nodded again.

"I see," he said. "Creeping paralysis. Caught your legs first, and is working up. You called it gout, didn't you? Well, you can still talk. What do you want to say?"

"There is a girl in San Francisco. Address in my log-book. The will in Honolulu. The pearls in my belt."

"Ah, the residuary legatee," Hendricks returned, still leaning over the motionless figure. "You expect me to sail your schooner to the coast and turn everything over to the girl. I see."

Ames thrice repeated a simple, sibilant "Yes."

Hendricks straightened up and smiled with the easy cynicism which had always marked him in Ames's mind as a soul unsubdued. "And what is to prevent my running off with the schooner and the pearls? Nothing at all."

For a long instant the two men's eyes met again Suddenly Ames said, in a pacific manner, "You are honest."

"Am I?" demanded Hendricks, calmly.

"Honest," affirmed the dying man. "Every fault but dishonesty. You will take everything to the address."

"Sure!" was the sardonic answer. "As a matter of fact, I *am* honest. That doesn't alter the fact, you know. You stole *my* schooner and *my* pearls. That kind of makes me entitled to your packet and your pearls, doesn't it?"

Captain Ames did not wince.

"I got 'em away from you fair enough," he said. "They're mine. I intended all along to take my stuff back to *her*. You never understood; I was strong enough to be"—he seemed to hesitate for some adjective more applicable to his secret character—"what you called 'Killer' Ames. And I was strong enough to know when I'd got what I wanted and quit all this and—go back. You understand now?"

Hendricks's mouth became a little firmer.

"I see," he muttered. "You'd go back with

the blood on your hands and never let on that you weren't a saint. Well?"

"I haven't given up yet," was the response, in an unruffled tone. "I know I'm dying. But the schooner and the pearls go back to *her*."

For a moment the motionless man breathed hastily and determinedly. When he spoke again, it was not so distinctly.

"I'll do you a good turn, Hendricks, in spite of yourself. I beat you fairly once. Now I'll make you honest, in spite of yourself." His undimmed eyes met the other's with absolute firmness. "It'll be the making of you, Hendricks."

Something of the dying man's indomitable spirit seemed to infuse these words with a vitality that survived his own. For while his eyes remained open, apparently gazing at something, Hendricks recognized the final incident and closed them. Having done so, he stepped back, repeating, "The making of me, did he say? The red-handed pirate!" He had recourse to the cupboard, sipping his liquor with an expression in which his ordinary attitude of leisurely contemplation was accentuated. He did not even raise his eyes when another figure loomed in the doorway and a husky voice said, ingratiatingly, "Captain Ames, I'd like a sup of the rum, sir."

"The skipper is asleep," Hendricks said, quietly, and passed the bottle out. The other drank quickly, and shook his head. "The old man is getting wonderfully drowsy lately," he whispered.

"So he is, Peterson," Hendricks returned, in a low tone. "Where's Wilks?"

"Cooking breakfast."

"So? Let's have some coffee."

The two men went out, glancing from habit at the schooner at anchor in the bay, a small expanse of water fledged with wind-riven palms.

"Captain told me last night to see to it that the water-casks were filled this morning," the mate remarked. As there was no response, he continued: "He's going to sail pretty soon."

"Very likely. I'll go back after a while. He wants me to make out some papers for him."

"That means Honolulu and the mail, anyway," the mate said, briskly. "Well, that's good news, for sure."

Neither said more as they joined a small, grey-haired man who was cooking something over an oil stove precariously balanced on a box under a palm tree. This individual gave them no greeting whatever, but merely pointed to a coffee-pot on the sand. It was evident that he was making an omelet. From his air of listening, they knew that he was preparing breakfast for Captain Ames.

They each ate a couple of biscuits and drank a cup of muddy coffee. Then Peterson gave up his attempt at breakfast in disgust. "I'll have another sup out of the old man's bottle," he remarked, surlily.

"I'll bring it to you," Hendricks volunteered. "He won't miss it. He'll think he finished it himself last night."

He entered the room where the body lay and brought the bottle out, with every appearance of being careful not to awaken a sleeping brute. Then he watched the mate roll away down the beach, bawling to the Kanakas on the schooner to come and fetch him aboard. When the whale-boat had been in and was well on its way back, Hendricks strolled across the sand to where the fidgeting Wilks doddered over his omelet in a perfect doldrums of doubt and fear.

"Don't worry," Hendricks said, calmly. "I'll take his breakfast to the skipper."

Wilks fairly tumbled over his own incapable feet to be rid of the task. His voice quavered in a whisper: "I jest hate to take it to him this time. He's slept late, and that al'ays means his temper——"

"Yes, yes," Hendricks put in. "But I'll take it to him this time. Don't shake so." As he turned away he spoke over his shoulder, "Better be ready to get aboard to-day."

Back within the shelter of the shanty Hendricks put the food down and surveyed the grim form on the cot. Ames was an oppressive figure, even in death. His austere visage had lost nothing of its implacability. It would require eternity to soften the lineaments which time had hardened. Hendricks drew the yellowed sheet over the corpse. Then he thrust his two hands beneath it, fumbled a moment, and drew out a broad, soft leather belt, which he laid on the table beside a log-book, scrawled all over with the blunt reckonings of the dead man.

"I suppose that temporarily I'm the sole heir and executor," Hendricks murmured, aloud. "Let's see what's in the estate."

The belt disclosed a varied assortment of valuables, a couple of hundred pounds in English notes, a dozen sovereigns, a twenty-dollar gold piece, a poor emerald, a cigarette case sealed with tape and wax, and a plain gold band.

"Looks like a wedding-ring," Hendricks surmised aloud, and passed on to the consideration of a thin packet of papers. They included certain ship's documents and a bill of exchange for two thousand dollars made out to "Captain George Hendricks." This he scowled over.

"Now, why didn't he forge my endorsement and cash it?" he demanded of the still room. He recalled the day when Ames had despoiled him of it, that day when George Hendricks ceased to be a shipowner and master, lost his connection with the outside world and became the poorly paid associate of Killer Ames. He put the draft in his pocket. Then he cut the tape about the cigarette case and allowed the contents to escape from their cottony nest to the rough top of the table.

For a quarter of an hour Hendricks looked at the pearls lying heaped before him—the spoils of rapine, treachery, and ruthless bloodshed. Finally he swept the whole lot back into their receptacle with a laugh.

"Not worth a dollar!" he told the silent one. "You're dead and they're dying. You were fooled at the last, in spite of your smoothness, Killer Ames! You'd have gone to that girl and boasted of your riches, and when you came to show 'em down, they'd have been just dead pearls—not worth a cent, for all the murder you did to get them!"

But he neglected the log-book's secrets to consider this catastrophe. He knew that the pearls had been perfect, worth a hundred thousand dollars. How had they spoiled? What had made them die?

Like all pearl-fishers, Hendricks was superstitious. He knew a thousand tales about these frail, precious jewels of the sea. But never had he heard of a whole treasure of pearls losing their brilliancy and their life at once, in a short time. What was the explanation? He gave up the problem and accepted the fact, feeling a sudden, profound contempt for Ames. The man was nothing at all, really—just as much a fool as others. Witness his cherishing a lot of worthless pearls and babbling about "going back" and "the girl."

He understood perfectly that his own affair was ended. No money in the estate for himself. But Ames had spoken of a will in Honolulu. He had—very likely a mere empty document. The girl wouldn't get much.

He meditated over her. Who was she? How had she met Ames? What did she know about him? And had a pretty woman, too, actually fallen under the man's spell? What a joke to go to her in San Francisco and give her these rotten pearls, as Ames's bequest! It would be splendid revenge on the Killer.

He realized that he had laughed long and loud, when there was a sound of footsteps outside the house. He started up and went to the door. Standing there, he turned his face inwards again and called in a bantering tone: "It's Wilks, Captain. Shall I let him have a drink?" Then he bent his sardonic gaze on the shuffling man hesitating a dozen feet away.

"I sh'd like liquor," quavered Wilks, darting a glance of pure hatred at the wall between him and his enemy.

Hendricks nodded coldly and withdrew, knowing well that he would venture no nearer. He came out with a freshly-opened bottle, handed it over and said: "Captain Ames wants you to go aboard and *stay* there."

The old man blinked. Then his lips parted in a mirthless grin. "I nearly killed him once, when I had drunk plenty," he whispered, almost boastfully. "Huh! Is that the way he feels?" He drank avidly. "He's afraid of old Wilks when I'm drunk. He better be!"

Alone once more, Hendricks picked up the log-book and addressed the corpse. "All right, I'll just take the schooner and this stuff to San Francisco," he said, tauntingly. "You thought you'd get ahead of me again. But what'll the dame say to your rotten pearls? Hey? I'll laugh when I see her face. Oh, yes! I'm honest, am I? I'm too honest for *your* peace of mind, by heavens!"

Without further ado he packed the contents of the belt, the log-book, and a couple of bottles from the cupboard into an old carpet-bag which Ames had always affected, nodded to the sheeted form, and went out.

"So ends this cruise," he announced, glancing over the desert island. "Now, Mr. Peterson. I don't like you. I don't need you, and I won't have you." He let his finger rest on the butt of the revolver in his belt, and smiled. A quarter of a mile away, he saw the mate overseeing the loading of the filled water-casks. Much nearer was a dinghy into which Wilks was huddling some small cooking-gear, stopping now and then to inflame his senile blood with renewed draughts from the bottle. Hendricks strode down upon him, tossed the carpet-bag into the bottom of the boat, and said, curtly: "The old man says to put that in his cabin. Better get away, now. He's coming out pretty soon. We sail in an hour."

Wilks bent his acrimonious gaze on the young man's well-set-up figure, and snarled an assent.

"'Nd, if I was as young as you, I'd never sail with him again," he muttered. "Killer Ames, is he? Some day——"

Hendricks answered with an easy laugh. "All right, Papa. Talk as much as you like. *But* you'd better stir your pins."

"I was Cap'n Wilks once," was the trembling reply. "No matter now." He thrust the little craft off the beach with unexpected strength in his meagre muscles, and sculled away.

When Peterson glanced up after examining the hoops of the last barrel and stamping the bung in with his heel, he saw Hendricks close by, and asked, thickly: "When's the old man coming off?"

Hendricks did not immediately answer. The sweat started out on his forehead. His fingers clutched the butt of his revolver. A swift glance at the Kanakas told him that with the uncanny sensitiveness of their race they expected something extraordinary to happen. Now was his time to complete what had begun when Ames died. One shot—it seemed as if he heard the explosion!—and Peterson, the brute, would also be out of his way. Hendricks had never killed a man. It was a weakness. He suddenly turned away and answered the question.

"Pretty soon, Mr. Peterson. He wishes you to stow the water and get your anchor clear. Send the boat off for us when you are ready."

Hendricks watched the boat slip over the glassy surface of the little bay until it entered the shadow of the schooner. Then he retired and went quietly into the shanty.

Nothing is so fatal to one's self-esteem as to find that the execution of a plain purpose is impossible because of one's inherent weakness. Hendricks's course of action lay before him, too plain for debate. After two years of what had been nothing less than real servitude to a man who had filched his worldly goods and his self-respect therewith, he was unexpectedly set free by Ames's sudden death. What simpler than to take the Killer's schooner in lieu of the one he had lost, appropriate Ames's property as slight repayment for his own, and so depart for the coast and there destroy the illusion which Ames had laboured to establish in the mind and heart of some woman? Simple and safe. All that stood before him and the secure accomplishment of this was Peterson. And when he had seen that

misshapen visage and heard those gross tones and felt the soulless strength of the man, Hendricks had been unable to kill him, though reason urged and memory justified the act. Looking wrathfully at the form on the cot, he said, "You're right, I've got just one virtue, and that's weak, piffling honesty."

He went down to the beach, where the mate was just coming ashore. "The skipper has decided not to sail till midnight," Hendricks lied. "He says there ought to be a breeze then; that will save us towing the schooner through the pass. He wants you to stay aboard. I'm to stay here, and we'll be off after dark."

The mate laughed, his ugly face to the cloudless sky. "I bet you!" he rumbled. "I know when the old man gets a notion. He's taking his rum regular, as he always does when by an inarticulate rumbling tone which trailed off into another gust of bellowing hilarity.

"Wilks running amuck," he thought. "Peterson probably merely clamped him in his arms and squeezed the breath out of him."

He was certain of this when he saw a figure which could be that of no one but Wilks scramble overside into the dinghy and put towards shore. A brief glance at him as he disembarked on the sand told him that the old man was in a kind of stupor, barely cognizant of his surroundings.

It was absolutely dark when Hendricks at last staggered down the beach with the body in his arms. As he eased it into the bottom of the boat, he peered at Wilks searchingly. The old man merely mumbled and mechanically took the oars.

They approached the vessel's side quietly.

"FOR A QUARTER OF AN HOUR HENDRICKS LOOKED AT THE PEARLS LYING HEAPED BEFORE HIM—THE SPOILS OF RAPINE, TREACHERY, AND RUTHLESS BLOODSHED."

he's bound for port at last. All right; I take some, too."

Hendricks drew out a key and handed it over. "It's to the skipper's locker on board. Help yourself. Better give Wilks some, too."

"Wilks?" grinned the mate, almost closing his dull eyes. "Hoho! Papa Wilks is sharpening his knives already. He's fair murderous now. Hoho!" Peterson's hilarious bellow rang out over the lagoon. As the smiling sailors pulled slowly for the schooner, the lonely man on the beach heard again and again the terrific roar of that laughter, pealing to the empty sky, the guffaws of mindless might at the petty mewings of a thin soul in torment.

Till sundown Hendricks heard no more from the schooner—except towards dark, when he caught the acrimonious babble of a voice which he knew to be the old man's; it was followed

There was no hail from the deck. Hendricks hauled the dinghy alongside and clambered up softly. Not a sailor was to be seen. Peterson was asleep on a long chair on the poop.

Finding all clear for his last act, Hendricks went down into the little boat and again picked up the body. By incredible exertions and aided by Wilks, who mumbled something about the captain's being drunk, he got what had been Killer Ames on deck and thence down into the cabin. Here he dismissed his assistant, and single-handed completed his task of getting the corpse securely into Ames's berth.

When he had closed the door on it, he steadied himself with a long pull at a bottle on the table, token of Peterson's activities, and went forward to stir out the crew. Within half an hour the anchor was catheaded, and the schooner was slipping silently outward towards the pass.

Hendricks steered carefully for the narrow openings between the low banks till the ebb tide caught the vessel and hurried her onward, and the breeze outside filled her sails as she bore away to the north. He then cleared the decks, taking occasion on his rounds to look into the half-deck cabin upon Wilks, who was huddled on his bed, staring into space.

When the island was only a thickening of the horizon behind him, Hendricks wakened Peterson, who seemed to be past comprehension of anything, but managed to keep his feet and stand his watch for an hour.

"He won't suspect anything," Hendricks thought, with satisfaction. "But I must get him wide awake; otherwise he'll not believe the old man is aboard."

He effected his purpose by taking the wheel and jibing the schooner. When he had her on her course again and had picked Peterson out of the scuppers, where he had been knocked by the swinging boom, he shook him angrily.

"You're a pretty seaman!" he growled in his ear. "What will the skipper say? Wake up, you fool!"

Peterson rubbed his aching head and gradually realized his plight. "I was sound asleep," he grumbled.

"You were," Hendricks said, in a loud whisper. "The old man saw you, and he laughed."

The mate's sodden face sobered instantly. "Laughed, did he?" he responded, in a husky murmur. "Laughed? My God!"

"What are you going to do about it?" Hendricks demanded, enjoying the feeling that this uncouth brute could be cowed by a mere suggestion that his master was preparing punishment for him.

Peterson shuddered and turned his wry face to his companion with a piteous expression on it. "He's a devil," he gurgled. "He laughed, you say? The last time Killer Ames *laughed* was when——" His eyes seemed to start from his head at a vision. Then he drew back, overcome with nausea. Hendricks listened to his unsteady footfalls as he walked back and forth on the little deck, and his own face darkened. He had heard of a time when Ames laughed. It was not a veracious report mouthed over a drink, nor gossip, nor a tale told for the talebearing; it was a mere whisper, concluding with a faint "—Killer Ames laughed." He went below.

Sitting on his bunk in the stuffy room which had confined his activities for so long, he struggled to drive the phantasmic horror from his mind. Well enough he knew the air he had breathed while associated with Ames had been filled with this same mysterious miasma; time and again he had seen other men choked by some invisible and subtle poison emanating from the man's simple presence. His own easy cynicism had saved him. He hadn't really allowed himself to perceive the truth of the Killer's monstrous tyranny, that it was founded on a past so dark that the very flame of Ames's passion had cast a shadow. Now he felt the awe which other men felt, the unreasoning dread which cowed even the gross and senseless Peterson. It seemed to him that Death itself had drawn back at the last moment—he leaped up wildly. What? Not dead? No! There was a sound behind that closed door! The corpse was stirring, was fumbling at the yellow sheet. With starting eyeballs Hendricks peered into the gloom of the cabin—hearing that muffled and terrible sound of an unholy resurrection.

He could not discern anything in the shadow—except a hand that seemed to materialize yellowishly, clutching for the door-knob. But this hand was outside. He watched it, dumbly. Then his blurred eyes cleared. He saw Wilks.

The old man was seized with no vile physical passion now. His transfigured face suddenly became plainly to be seen, and it told of a purpose so bleak that it was unearthly. His bright eyes glittered; his grey lips were parted as if in triumphant aspiration. He was making for the blank door behind which Killer Ames lay concealed. He reached it, turned the knob noiselessly, entered, closed the door behind him.

Hendricks leaned forward and waited, his temple resounding to the dull throb of the heart. The door was opening again—swung wide. A dark and shadowy shape emerged and slipped away. Hendricks still stared at the half-open door.

He roused himself only when the mate clumped down the steps and came over to him and peered at him with bloodshot eyes and whispered: "Hendricks! Come up and stand the watch with me."

"All right," was the response. "Have you got the bugaboos too?"

Peterson wiped his slavering lips on the back of his hand and glanced fearfully over his shoulder at the captain's door. When he saw that it was not closed, he cringed. He seemed on the point of hysterical speech, but Hendricks, his own nerves tingling, seized him by the arm and led him back on deck.

"Pull yourself together, man," he said, wrathfully.

"Is th' old man awake?"

Hendricks fixed his eyes on the bright stars burning in the sky. Was it time to tell the truth? He felt Peterson's groping fingers on his arm. He laughed, pointed upward with a strange gesture.

"I guess he's awake," he said. "I hear him laughing."

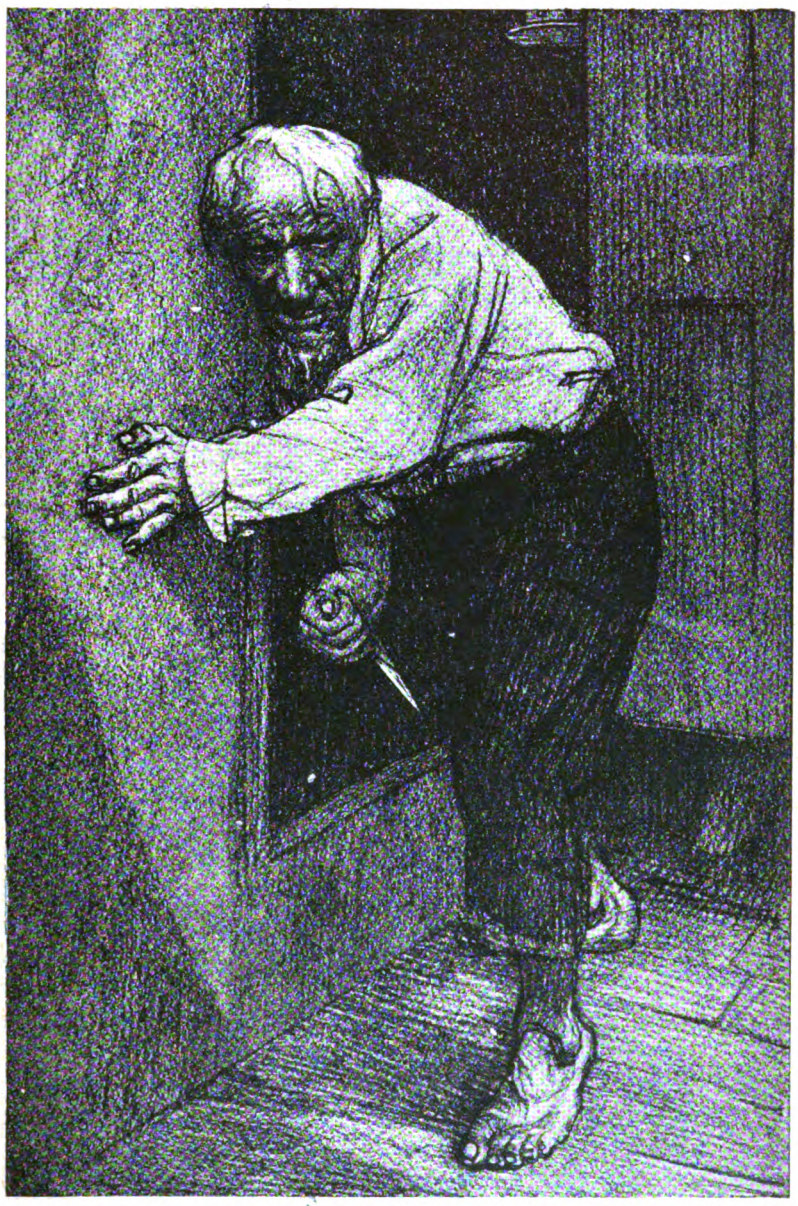
The mate's fleshy finger dribbled on his sleeve. "Laughing?"

"At Wilks."

Peterson's voice fell to a mutter. He drew his companion out of earshot of the man at the wheel, to whisper a secret.

"He better be careful of old Wilks," he said, thickly. "Wilks is dangerous. *I'm* afraid of him—I'm afraid of Billy Wilks that was, before Killer Ames stole his wife and marooned Billy on an atoll. Three years Billy was on that there island, Billy that feared neither God nor man nor devil till Ames came along. 'You was never afraid of anybody,' I remarks to Cap'n Ames one day, 'except Billy Wilks. And *he's* safe and sound on that

island.' Ames looks at me and laughs. 'By George, I nearly forgot Billy,' says he, and he up and changed the course and made the atoll. Old Wilks was on the beach, all smeary with turtle-egg and handling a knife. 'Wilks,' says the Killer, 'I nigh forgot you. Haw've you been?' The old boy held up the blade and quavered: 'I kept this sharp two years to fight you with, but it wore out digging shell.' 'Throw it away or keep it,' says Ames, nicely. 'Come aboard.' Old Billy scrawned his throat and cackled, 'Where's my wife?' And the skipper he looks across at him and licks his lips. 'The lady you called your "lamb person"?' he says, very softly, and laughed. Yes, sir; Killer Ames just laughed. And Billy Wilks that was, and had made fun on his own quarter-deck with his wife and called her little names like she was a child, listened to him, and came over the side and has been just what you see him now. But"—Peterson's voice lowered into a mere mutter—"I *seen* the old Billy Wilks just now, a-stepping along the deck with that long knife all clawed in his fingers. And you say Killer Ames laughed again? My God!"



"OLD BILLY WILKS A-STEPPING ALONG THE DECK WITH THAT LONG KNIFE ALL CLAWED IN HIS FINGERS."

"You're seeing ghosts, man."

Peterson lifted his misshapen face to the dark firmament, as if to discern in the empty vault whatever it was that shadowed his world. Hendricks shook himself.

"Ghosts!" he repeated. "Come and I'll show you one."

Peterson stared at him dully. "What d'ye mean?"

"Come and see. The skipper wants you."

"I can't go," the mate protested, with a profound misery in his tone. "I don't understand him at all. But he always has the laugh on us."

"On some of us," Hendricks corrected. "On Wilks, and on you, for instance, but not on me."

Hendricks led him down the steps into the cabin and trimmed the lamp before pointing toward the open door of the captain's room. The mate stared at nothing, his mouth set in a grimace.

"After all, it was a good joke on Wilks,"

Hendricks went on, calmly, pushing the door farther open and disclosing the still form of Captain Ames.

The mate gazed at the grey face of his commander, and slowly understanding came to him. He pointed to the blot on the yellow sheet just over the Killer's breast. In an appalled whisper he said, "Billy Wilks did it."

Hendricks felt a sudden need for plain speaking. He must put a stop to this ghastly mummery. He shook the mate roughly.

"No," he said, loudly, "Ames died yesterday morning. Wilks was too late, don't you see? Ames died yesterday, with me in the room. Says he to me, 'The joke is on the boys, Hendricks. I've made 'em step lively, and when I'm gone they'll think they're quit of me.' Then he laughed." Hendricks smiled into Peterson's staring eyes. "He laughed," he repeated. "And so did I."

This he said in his new-born resolve to assume the sceptre which Ames had dropped. It fell in with his purpose to maintain the reign of terror. And so he forced himself to laugh loudly. But to his surprise Peterson joined him, throwing his unkempt head back, showing the circular nostrils with their thick, fleshy walls. His mouth opened cavernously.

"Hoho!" he roared, stertorously, resting his huge paws on his hips. The little cabin resounded to his merriment, as his great voice rose and rose in volume in that terrible jocosity. Hendricks stepped back, in a cold perspiration. Then his eyes caught a crouching figure just behind the mate, and he moved still farther back.

As if in obedience to this silent movement, Wilks straightened himself up, darted out one skinny arm and withdrew it slowly. Peterson, mouth still open, ceased his wild hilarity, and sank crumbling to the deck.

Instantly sobered, Hendricks plucked the knife out of the old man's fingers.

".I think there will be no more laughing on this schooner, Wilks," he remarked.

"*Captain* Wilks," said the old man, sibilantly.

Hendricks humoured him. "Very well, captain. Now what?"

"You will act as mate, Mr. Hendricks. Clean out this cabin, if you please."

The younger man stared after his new commander with a feeling that he was once again in the grip of a power too mighty for his buffeting. Ames was gone, Peterson was gone, remained Wilks, the Billy Wilks of former times, ruthless, inexorable, and terrific. He yielded his transient dream of freedom and acknowledged himself beaten.

By the time the forenoon was in its full Hendricks was again the cynical, tolerant subordinate. He had finished his task, and was leaning over the low rail of the schooner, staring down into the azure depths of the sea. Somewhere in the obscurity below him there was a shadow which now darkened, now faded. In the instant when he had dismissed Ames and Peterson to their final abode, that shadow had grown amazingly distinct for a moment, and then became its present wavering blur. It struck him as a proper end to the two men's bloodstained lives that they should fall in their turns the prey of monsters of the sea.

Wilks, who was striding back and forth on the poop, suddenly stepped up beside him. Involuntarily Hendricks lazily pointed out the sinister shadow and asked, "Friend of yours, captain?"

Wilks leaned over the rail and screwed up his peering eyes. He shook his head judicially.

"Friend of Ames," he croaked, then with an absurd transition he went on, "And some woman will miss him, Mr. Hendricks."

There rose before Hendricks's eyes the dim vision of a girl waiting for Ezra Ames to come in from sea after his adventures, his hands full of treasure. His thought found utterance. "Dead pearls."

Wilks blinked. "They do die," he cackled. He chewed his lips reflectively. "I knew a man once whose pearls died on his hands. 'I'm stony broke,' says he, looking down at 'em, and blew out his brains. I took them pearls to Amsterdam for luck. 'Nd a woman that was waiting in an upper room at the dealer's put 'em about her neck, and the dealer paid me a thousand pounds for the pearls and told me the woman loved them, and they would come alive again in the warmth of her bosom. It's always a woman that brings the dead back, Mr. Hendricks."

Wilks was silent, and his companion surmised that this was an obscure reference to himself and the woman he had lost. Possibly when Ames died, Hendricks thought, the barrier between the old man and his long-mourned wife had also fallen, and she had come back, a kind of spiritual presence which had rejuvenated him and made him master once more. But he put away the fancy as morbid. Too many ghosts already haunted the schooner.

"Then that's true about pearls?" he inquired, with an effort at naturalness.

"Pearls—and other treasure," the old man said, ruminatively.

"Did Ames have any pearls?" Hendricks pursued, as a feeler.

"Killer Ames have pearls?" returned Wilks, pawing his beard. "Hee-hee!"

And this shrill cachinnation was the sum of the old man's response, to be taken as a comment on, Hendricks supposed, the vanity of toil and imperilling one's soul for transitory things. At any rate, Billy Wilks had no intention of seeking for hidden treasures. So that night Hendricks stowed away in a safe place what Captain Ames had left, and studied interestedly the address in the log-book. It was perfectly plain:—

SUSAN MATHEWS,
4847, Steiner Street,
San Francisco, Calif.

Very thoughtfully Hendricks considered this and its meaning. To him the name of woman meant a weakness; Killer Ames had not been weak. Even when he had swooped down on Wilks and stolen his wife—that vague and precious "lamb person" chronicled by the whispering Peterson—reducing the erstwhile masterful Billy

to a cringing crone, the dead man had apparently not betrayed mere human frailty. Who was this woman? The name proved that it was *not* Mrs. Wilks. Who was Susan Mathews?

A mystery!

In his new position as mate under Wilks, standing a regular watch, with none to speak with or question, Hendricks found himself much given to quiet self-inquisition. The routine of the schooner was without incident to divert his attention from the problem of existence. In the night watches he demanded of himself: What do I want?

"There must be something somewhere," he said to himself. "I used to think there was a life worth living. I have forgotten what it was, I guess."

So he turned his thoughts back upon his environments. Wilks affected him as a curious study. Here was a man who had altered from a whining and incapable drudge into an alert and composed shipmaster. He more than held his own in the daily emergencies of the voyage, and he was most evidently straight on the direct road to the achievement of some purpose. Hendricks was compelled to believe that the act of murder had been beneficial to him. And logically he was forced to consider the question whether Wilks might not kill him, too, in pursuance of his mysterious aims.

When Wilks said, one morning, "We'll make Honolulu in six days," he roused himself to inquire, "Why Honolulu, sir?"

The old man shut his lips tightly and scanned the cloud-flecked sky. Then he looked down on Hendricks to say, "If you like, you can have the schooner then. I have no use for her. I'll stop in Honolulu."

"Do you mean to say you will turn this vessel over to me, captain?"

"Did you ever hear tell of Billy Wilks?" came the sharp query.

"Why—I—yes, sir."

"I'm Billy Wilks. Ten years ago Killer Ames laughed at me in George's coffee-house—told the boys Billy Wilks was a bluff—not worth listening to. Ames laughed. *They* laughed, too. I'm just going back to George's and laugh at *them*." He fixed his eyes on his mate and nodded several times with great satisfaction. "Who'll laugh now? Not Killer Ames. What do I care for his old schooner? Hey, hey? The vessel's yours."

Hendricks did not conceal his astonishment.

"Do you mean to say you aren't going to do anything?"

"Do?" repeated Wilks. "What else is there to do? Hey? I've done it. I'm going back to George's and order a cup of coffee and watch the boys come in and stare at me—at Billy Wilks, which is back in the flesh when Killer Ames is overside in a thousand fathom. An' I'll stare back at 'em, and they'll know as Wilks was all right, and came back in his own ship and nobody dared look sideways at him."

"And then?"

Wilks smiled craftily.

"I'll stay there, always on deck where people will come and look and say, 'Well, well! Ames is dead and gone, but look who's here—Captain Billy Wilks.'"

Slowly Hendricks realized that the old man told the precise truth. After all his suffering—after years on a desert isle watching the sea-line for the sail of the man who had ravished his "lamb person"—he had committed murder and seized a schooner just to go back to a coffee-house and stand in the eye of an obscure public as a man who was superior to Killer Ames. He had lived and struggled and survived, not for hours of tender reminiscence of happy days, but to preen himself on his ignobly petty pride. Hendricks set Wilks down as a fool. He dismissed him from his mind when he had left at Honolulu with a hasty farewell and a "Wish you pleasant voyage, cap'n."

"Hum!" Hendricks muttered to himself. "He never even entered the vessel at the custom-house. What'll I do?" The native bo'sn, mindful only of the possibility of being paid off and having a riot ashore, could not answer him. But he spoke of money.

"Sure enough," Hendricks said, and called the crew aft and settled with them out of the funds he had found in Ames's belt.

"Now," he said, when the last man had made his mark, "I'm going to sail for San Francisco. Who'll go with me?"

Astonished enough he was when the natives, to a man, volunteered and said they would forego the delights of stopping ashore.

"Then we'll sail to-night," Hendricks said, promptly, and left the ship in care of the bo'sn and departed to buy stores.

He came back in a *paké* hack with packages piled high about him. The bo'sn met him at the pier and babbled some incomprehensible things, while Hendricks interrupted: "What's that, what's that?" In the end he caught the meaning of the Kanaka's hasty speech and nodded.

"So Papa Wilks has been chattering, has he?" he remarked. "We'll hie us to sea, Uncle Harry, *wiki wiki*."

So, without fulfilling the legal formalities, Captain Hendricks took the schooner *Empress* to sea in the quiet starlight following a day of roaring trades, and in Molokai channel listened gravely to the incoherent story told by his bo'sn. Hendricks whistled.

"So that's what he said, is it?" he remarked. "I'd have thought the old boy had learned his lesson. But he had to boast of killing Ames, did he? Right out in public, eh? And said I had to stand by and look on? The old son of a gun! Uncle Harry, what'll we say in San Francisco?"

The old islander bent his wrinkled and benign face on his captain's and said, gently, "We say you very good man. Ames *poopooli*; Papa Billy *poopooli*. You good man; Kanaka boys love you." He stretched his dusky hand outward in a great gesture. "We boys go with you always."

Hendricks smiled. He put them down as a funny lot. Well, time would tell. Pretty soon they would be in San Francisco, and he would see Susan Mathews and hand over to her the lustreless pearls.

It had been one of Captain Ames's personal eccentricities always to keep his vessel clean and

well found. Now, in spite of her long sojourn in the tropics, her copper was bright, and she swept northward like a gull, made latitude thirty and swung eastward to the tune of the racing gales till Hendricks laughed over his daily reckonings in sheer pride. Fourteen days out from Koko Head, in the early morning, Uncle Harry lifted his dusky arm and pointed to a white blotch in the drifting cloud above the coastwise surf.

"The Cliff House!" cried Hendricks. "When did we pass the Farallones?"

No answer was forthcoming, and he marked down under "weather" for the morning watch, "Thick. Fresh gale." Having duly brought up the log he went on deck and hailed a tug. After a bit of bargaining this monitor took the *Empress* in tow and in the forenoon swung her to her anchorage off Angel Island. Before the hook was down the doctor's launch was alongside, and that busy official came over the side with a quick: "Ha! this is where you sailed for, eh?"

"It is," Hendricks replied, amiably.

"We've been waiting for you two weeks," the surgeon continued, scanning the white decks and scrutinizing the grinning hands. "Captain Ames died at sea, eh?"

"I suppose Captain Wilks reported it in Honolulu," Hendricks remarked. "It's all down in the log."

"Wilks reported a good many things, captain," was the curt response. "But not officially. I suppose you realize that you entered port in Honolulu without due formalities and sailed without leave?"

"That was his business, not mine," Hendricks protested.

"Well, it's up to you now," the doctor said. "Up to you now." He glared at him officially over his glasses.

"I'm here," was the answer.

"Sorry, but you'll have to stay here, too. Government orders. Can't pass you. Cable report that murder was done, and all that. Your crew as well as yourself held for examination."

"Now that is the very deuce and all," Hendricks said, thoroughly provoked. "I suppose old Billy Wilks had to tell a whole lot, didn't he?"

"Very likely," was the dry reply.

Hendricks saw several stolid and matter-of-fact men distribute themselves over his vessel and smiled helplessly. He drew the bo'sn aside and informed him of the orders. The islanders nodded, as much as to say that everything was all right. No one would talk.

All afternoon Hendricks kept his cabin, dozing the hours away and paying no attention to the occasional intrusion of some officer to make sure that he had not evaded the law. Supper he ate by himself, apparently quite satisfied to stay on his vessel, though the joyous city was preparing for another night's pleasure.

"You don't seem to worry much," remarked one of his guards, helping himself to a cigar from the table drawer.

"Not much," Hendricks said, coolly.

"Nor to be curious about the news," added the other. "Though you've been at sea and away from a newspaper for months, I'm told."

"Hang the news!" said Hendricks, and went into his room and closed the door.

At midnight he slipped out a big quarter-cabin window into the water, with his treasures and clothes made into a bundle in an oilskin bag. He swam silently away toward the shore.

It was quite daylight when he managed to drag himself up on the rocks below Fort Mason, and it was with some difficulty that he concealed himself to dress. This done, he considered himself with an anxious eye. He looked all right, he decided. No one would suspect him of being an escaped shipmaster. He clambered up the heights to a street-car line and went downtown. He had not been in San Francisco in six years, but he remembered a shop where good clothes were cheap, and questions, most likely, not asked.

An hour sufficed to equip him with what he needed—new shoes, a light top coat and a hat of a later block than the one he had purchased in Sydney three years before. Afterwards he proceeded to the beach and ate a hearty meal of fresh meat and vegetables at a little inn, smoked his first good cigar, and loafed until two o'clock. Then he hailed a cab and gave the driver the address of Susan Mathews, as Captain Ames had written it down in the log-book.

There is no mental attitude so strong that it will not be modified by the change from the solitude of the sea to the bustle of a city. As his cab rolled away toward the city to the steady clump of the horse's hoofs on the asphalt, Hendricks realized that he was on an important affair. For the first time he saw Ames's death, Peterson's murder, and the sequent events, as hugely vital matters, not mere happenings in a lifetime. He knew that Ames must at some time or another have been driven along this same thoroughfare bound for this same address. He pictured him in lively colours, his austere, bronzed countenance turned on the passing crowds with a steady expression of having superior interests. Ames would have looked forward to this trip, undoubtedly. Now that he was dead far away, he, Hendricks, was making it for him, doing Ames's very important errand, to a woman who had had a vast deal to do with Ames's life. He could not help predicting to himself the kind of woman this Susan Mathews must be, to whom Killer Ames addressed his last thoughts, for whom he had ravaged the uttermost seas, to whom he himself was now conveying a handful of worthless, dead pearls.

And what should he tell this Susan Mathews when he saw her? That Ames was dead like any mortal fool? That he had not mentioned her name when he was passing, but merely spoken of her as "her"? That his last bequest had been a lot of trifles not worth looking at? It all depended. He fell into a reverie, and only roused himself with a start when the cab stopped before a big house on the brow of a hill. He heard the cabman's gruff, "Yer place, mister," and stepped out briskly.

"By Jove! Ames didn't find his love in a hovel," he said to himself.

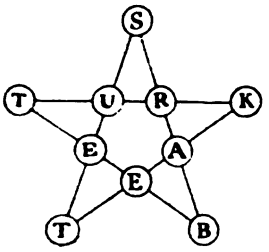
The conclusion of "The Temporary Heir" will appear next month.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

366.—THE WORD STAR PUZZLE.

HERE is what I believe to be an entirely new form of word puzzle, a perhaps welcome change from the old familiar word square. It will be seen that ten letters are so placed in the circles that all the five lines of four letters display good English words. Thus the words in the example given are TURK, TEAK, SUET, BARS, and BEET. It will be seen that a word may read upwards or downwards, to right or to left; the direction is of no importance. Now, try to construct a similar star from the five words hidden in the following lines :—



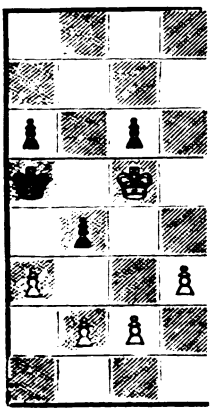
A product of the poet's brain.
A ray of light is clearly here.
A tree that flourishes amain.
You need this for the poor man's beer.
A vehicle much used by man,
Though ne'er on king's highway it ran.

The order of the words is not disclosed; the solver must fit them in himself when found. The puzzle is, of course, quite an easy one.

367.—COUNTING THE HUNS.

A CORRESPONDENT in Rio de Janeiro is kind enough to send me the following veracious story. A prisoner of war, Herr Adolph Schmidt, explained to a fellow-captive that the force to which he belonged originally consisted of one thousand men, but that it lost heavily in an engagement, and the survivors surrendered and were marched down to one of our concentration camps. On the first day's march one-sixth of the survivors escaped, and on the second day one-eighth of the remainder escaped, and, moreover, one man died. On the third day's march one-fourth of the remainder escaped. Arrived in camp, the remainder were set to work in four equal gangs. Herr Schmidt was asked how many had been killed in the engagement, but he could not remember. Can you assist his memory by giving the correct answer?

368.—A PRETTY END-GAME.



HERE is a little chess end-game that was published many years ago by M. D'Orville, of Antwerp. I am sure it will interest my readers, and it is not difficult. White can checkmate Black in six moves. How does he do it? It is all done with the king and pawns, without any queening. Part of the board is omitted to save space.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

361.—A KNIGHT'S MOVE PUZZLE.

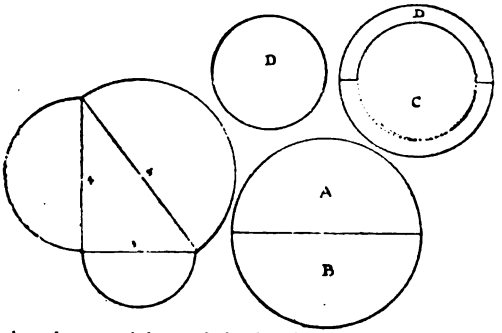
THE perplexing point to decide is whether the shaded numbers are mere dummies or not. If you decide not to move any of them, you will be wrong. The shortest solution without moving any of the shaded numbers is in thirty-two moves, but the puzzle may be solved in thirty moves. The trick lies in moving the 6 or the 15 on the second move and replacing it on the nineteenth move. Here is the solution: 2, 6, 13, 4, 1, 21, 4, 1, 10, 2, 21, 10, 2, 5, 22, 16, 1, 13, 6, 19, 11, 2, 5, 22, 16, 5, 13, 4, 10, 21. Thirty moves.

362.—THE THREE GARDEN BEDS.

THE sides of the three square beds measure respectively 31in., 41in., and 49in. The common difference of area is exactly five square feet.

363.—THE BUN PUZZLE.

EVERYBODY should know, since Pythagoras discovered it earlier than 500 B.C., and Euclid made it his forty-seventh proposition, that the square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is exactly equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides. But the law also applies to other figures. The diameters of the three buns were in the proportion 3, 4, 5, and



they form a right-angled triangle, since the square of 3 added to the square of 4 equals the square of 5. Therefore the large bun exactly equals the two others. Give Alfred the piece A, and Benjamin the piece B, then place the smallest bun on the middle-sized bun and cut away half the rim, giving Charles the piece C and David the two pieces D D. Every boy then has an equal share.

364.—MORE ABOUT HENS.

THE answer is half a hen and a half hen; that is, one hen. If one and a half hens lay one and a half eggs in one and a half days, one hen will lay one egg in one and a half days. And a hen who lays better by half will lay one and a half eggs in one and a half days, or one egg per day. So she will lay ten and a half (half a score and a half) in ten and a half days (a week and a half).

365.—A CRYPTIC WORD.

THE word is Excommunication. The following will make it quite clear :—

(E) (10) (100) (0) (1000) (1000) (UNI) (100) (AT) (X) (N).
(E) (X) (C) (O) (M) (M) (UNI) (C) (AT) (IO) (N).

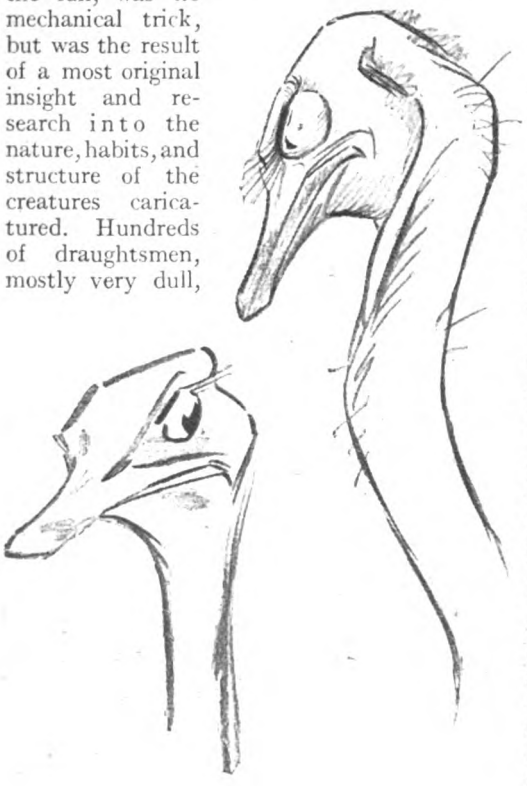
MR. J. A. SHEPHERD.
Photo. by Swaine.

HOW AN ANIMAL-CARICATURIST WORKS.

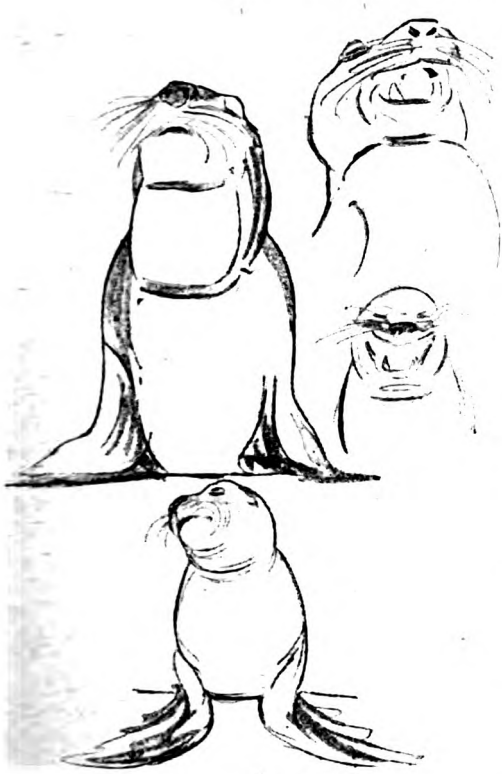
MR. J. A. SHEPHERD'S METHODS.

By LEONARD LARKIN.

RIGHT away from the very early days of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, more than a quarter of a century back, from time to time its pages have been brightened by drawings of extraordinary humour, spirit, and originality—the work of Mr. J. A. Shepherd. Not a bird that flies, or doesn't, not a fish that swims, not a creature that goes on legs of any number from two to infinity, but has been made to dance at the point of Mr. Shepherd's pencil a figure of fantastic humanity. The importation of human character, which was the vehicle of all the fun, was no mechanical trick, but was the result of a most original insight and research into the nature, habits, and structure of the creatures caricatured. Hundreds of draughtsmen, mostly very dull,



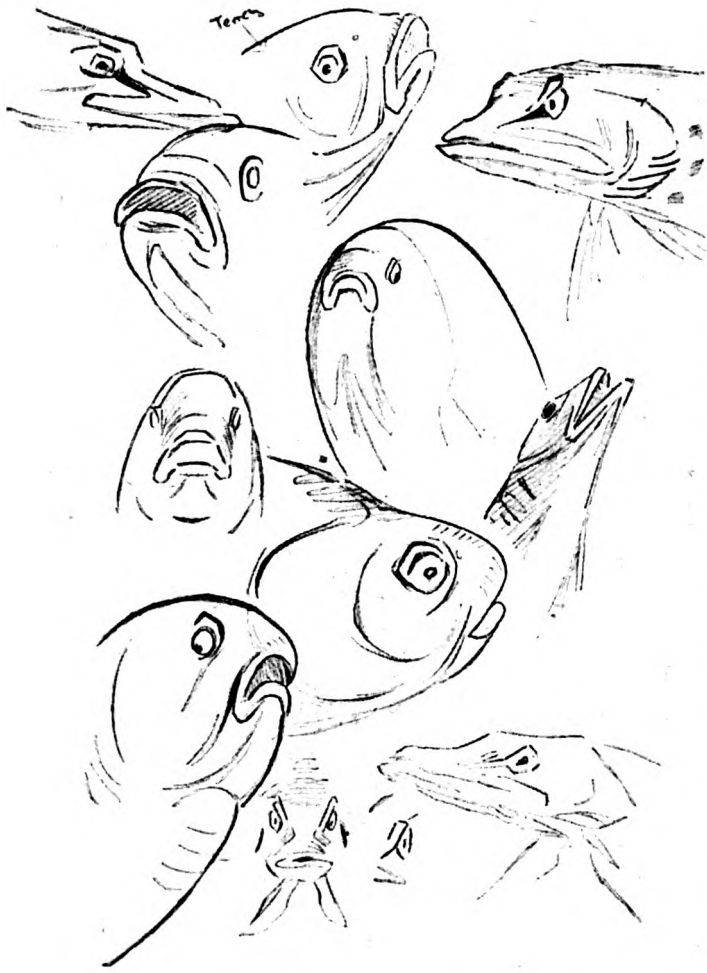
but some quite clever, had dressed up carefully-drawn animals in human clothes long before Mr. Shepherd was born, and many still continue to do so with more or less success. Grandville, the Frenchman, was far the best of these, eighty or ninety years ago, and Ernest Griset, forty years later, was also an artist of talent. These two, Grandville more especially, showed a vast deal more spirit and imagination than the average dealer out of tall hats and umbrellas to dogs and elephants, but they got little beyond a realistic presentation of animals in human circumstances and habiliments. With Mr. Shepherd, the clothes and human accessories arise and are suggested in most cases by some happy adaptation of the creatures in their natural forms; or



at most the hat or umbrella is added as a completing touch to a figure out of which the human fun is already drawn and needs a mere stroke of emphasis.

The introductory sketches of ostriches' heads (and necks) aptly illustrate this. A dozing ostrich loses all sense of uprightness in the neck, which wilts down irresponsibly, not to say drunkenly. The contrast between a very wide-awake ostrich and one in a dozy state so struck Mr. Shepherd that on the spot he sketched the two, giving such extra prominence to the bright eye of one and the closed lid of the other as to carry the suggestion a shade farther —the suggestion of a disreputable and inebriated husband encountered by an indignant vixen wife. The idea is visible and obvious in the sketch; in the two finished drawings the additions of a battered tall hat and a cigarette in the one case and a night-cap and flat candlestick in the other merely carry the suggestion to unmistakable completeness.

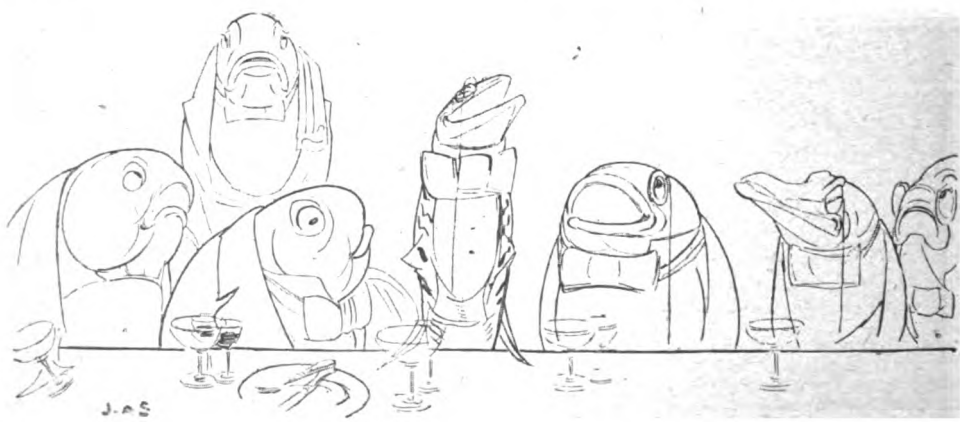
In this example we see Mr. Shepherd's method very clearly. It is not his way to make a careful drawing of an animal, laboriously copied from nature, and then arbitrarily twist it into unnatural attitudes, endue it into human clothes, and present the result as a "funny" animal drawing. He studies the animal with a practised eye, till something in the creature itself, some sudden movement, twist, or turn of form, suggests a human trait, and he seizes on that to strike the keynote of his drawing. That particular trait—that peculiarity of movement, attitude, or form—he brings into prominence, and correspondingly reduces other peculiarities, more especially those which agree least with the idea suggested. It is, in fact, the method of all good art, wherein the idea is expressed by the emphasis of certain features or qualities and the suppression or reduction of others which are unessential. Thus you receive the impression intended by the artist, and therein consists the value of his work beyond the mechanical reproduction of all features equally in a photograph. So that it will be perceived that caricature implies nothing but the usual methods of the true artist carried to a humorous extreme; and the artist is inspired, not by a mechanical desire to copy the external appearance of some animal and then force it into unnatural contortions in a desperate endeavour to be funny at all costs, but by an *idea*—an idea suggested by the creature he is studying,

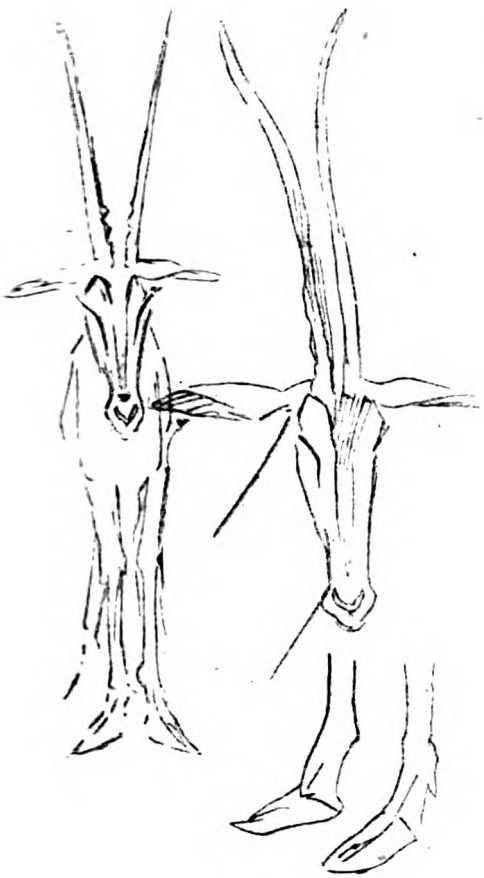


The process may be observed in all of the drawings illustrating this article. One contains a number of sketches made by Mr. Shepherd of the sea-lion at the Zoological Gardens, and next is the finished drawing in which the sea-lion appears in caricature as a jolly sailor. The elements of the final drawing are clearly to be discerned in the sketches from the life. Similarly one may perceive in the sketches of fish all the rudiments of the finished drawing, full of humour and keen observation, wherein these same fish figure as guests at a public dinner. The mackerel makes a speech; the pike, urbane after a full meal, smiles with all a pike's threatening teeth, and the others, tench and carp and the like, scarcely need a touch of the artist's fancy to typify the thick-necked, full-fed, mindless absorbers of rich food who are seen so often when people meet to eat.

Again, the preliminary sketches of the Beira antelope very clearly exhibit Mr. Shepherd's observation in action. It is easy to see how the hoofs have suggested to the alert mind of the artist the long, flat

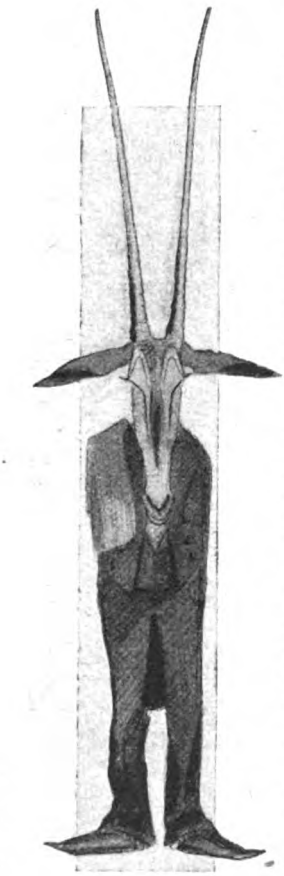
the idea which becomes the theme of his work, to be expressed by all the skill at his command.

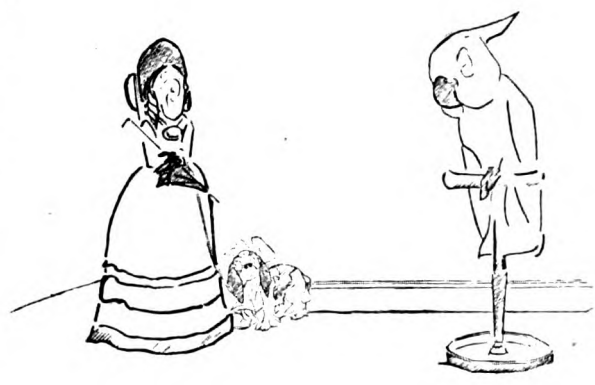


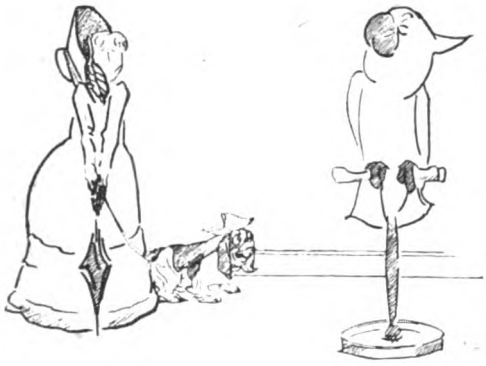


feet of the slippered waiter in one of the ancient London eating-houses, just as the patient, long, brooding face seems to take its place with equal appropriateness at the opposite end of the figure. The human clothes, you will perceive, are not crudely stuck on outside the figure of the quadruped; themselves and their character are subtly suggested everywhere by the contour of the animal itself. You will find this invariably throughout Mr. Shepherd's work, whenever he gives his subjects clothes. Either in figure or in character the creature suggests its own clothes, and the clothes in every case are *the* clothes, and no other, that the particular creature must have, if it has clothes at all. There is nothing incongruous about them—they do not surprise you in the least; you accept that particular suit of clothes as the veritable property of the animal in question—the suit you seem to remember him wearing ever since you first knew him. You can't imagine him in anything else.

Perhaps the most complete of the illustrations this article offers is found in the series of drawings suggesting the transformation of an old lady into a parrot. If you will look first at the last of the drawings, when the parrots sit side by side on their perches, and then at the first, where the old lady, parasol in hand, enters the room, you will see that nothing has been forced into the scheme in the intermediate pictures—the germ of every object, line and touch, in the last drawing is present and apparent in the first. By carrying your glance from the one drawing to the other you will see precisely how the idea suggested itself to the artist, and will be in a position to appreciate his ready imagination and his eye for form. The intermediate drawings, amusing as they are in themselves, explain the working of the idea and the relation of forms to the

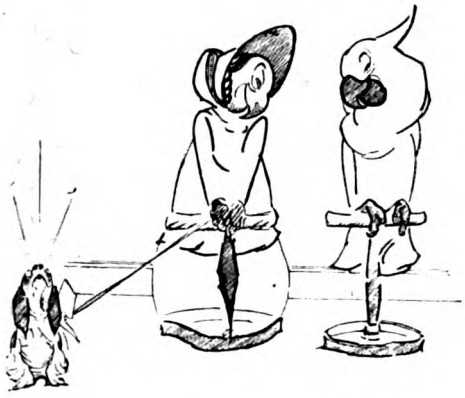




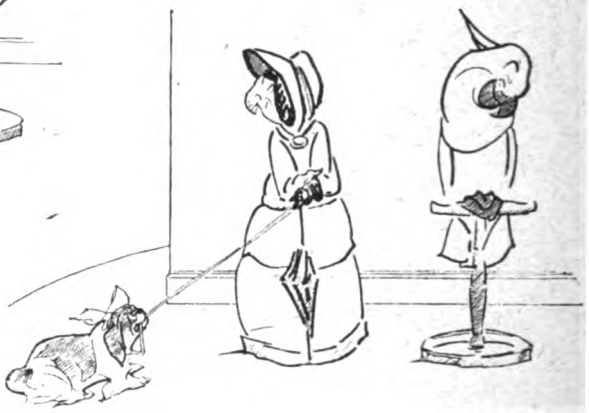


slower and untrained eye of the spectator. Particularly also one should note the by-comedy of the lap-dog, a complete little study in itself, yet taking its place naturally in the scene, and giving substance to the story.

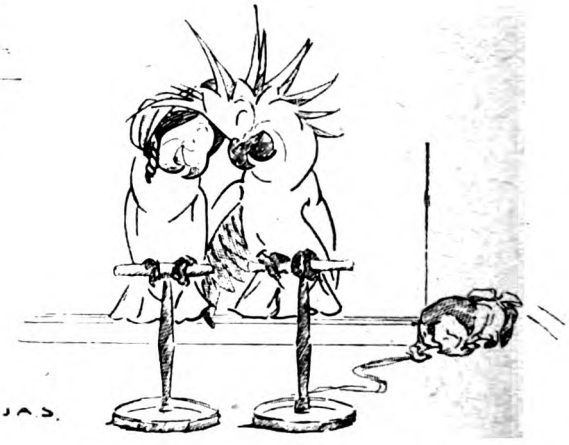
The life and natural vitality that sparkle in every one, even the slightest, of Mr. Shepherd's



drawings, result from his methods of patient study of his subjects. No artist who sat before an animal and laboriously fagged away at making a copy of the mere body could ever attain any such result. Just consider the hopelessness of this—very usual—method with a bird. A live bird is never still—it is a hundred different birds in half as many seconds, and any attempt to draw a bird complete from the living creature can only end in a dead figure. Nothing will do but the methods of the old Japanese artists, which, as a matter of fact, Mr. Shepherd has rediscovered independently for



himself. The creature must be studied with the eye and mind, and except for the roughest and most rapid notes on the spot, the pencil must be used afterwards from memory, with whatever assistance such notes may afford.



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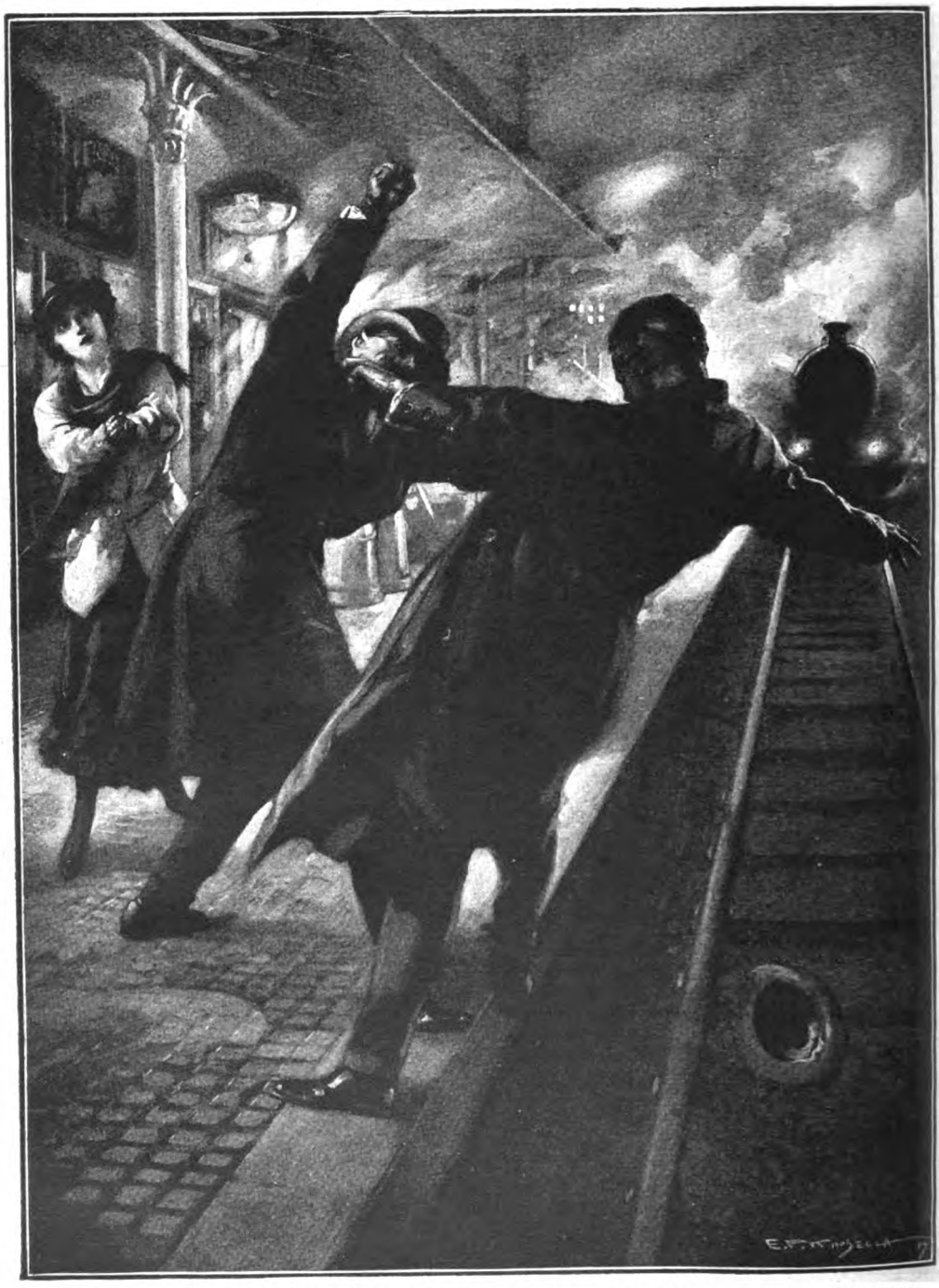
The Rose of Dawn

A Complete Novel

By

ETHEL M. DELL

Author of "The Way of an Eagle" etc.



"SHE SAW THE ITALIAN'S DARK FIGURE GLIDE LIKE A SERPENT BEHIND HUGO, AND THEN, ERE SHE REALIZED, THERE WAS A SUDDEN SHARP STRUGGLE."

(*See page* 221.)

The Rose of Dawn

By

ETHEL M. DELL

Illustrated by E. P. KINSELLA

"At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope?'
To which an answer pealed from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand;
And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn."

—TENNYSON.

PROLOGUE.

THE FIRE OF EVENING.

A SOFT wind was rustling through the orange groves on the slope above the sea, wafting a scent of violets through the night. A wonderful full moon hung like a beacon on the southern horizon, transforming the whole bay into a sheet of silver. And in the recess by the French window that was thrown open to the night a woman sat listening, waiting.

A beautiful woman dressed magnificently! There were diamonds on her neck and bosom that shimmered and flashed with every breath she drew. A great star of diamonds glittered in her soft brown hair. Against her robe of black her skin gleamed dazzlingly fair. Her eyes—grey eyes under straight, fine brows—shone brighter than all. They were slightly sunken, and the hollows around them were very dark. Her face, perfectly modelled though it was, was thin. The line of the chin was beginning to be prominent. A splendid woman in a splendid setting, but one who had passed her zenith! A woman who had lived her life!

There came a sound, the tread of a man's feet in the garden below. The aromatic scent of a cigar dispelled the elusive incense of the violets. The watcher above made a slight gesture of withdrawal. A faint flush rose in her pale face.

The feet drew nearer. They paused.

She leaned slowly forward again. "A perfect night, Gaspare," she said.

"It is heaven on earth," a voice made answer. "Come out, *carissima!* Come out and join me!"

But the woman in the chair by the window did not stir. "Not to-night, Gaspare," she said. "Finish your cigar and then come in to me and we will talk."

The man on the path below made an impatient sound that did not resolve into words, and there fell a silence.

Then again there came the tread of his feet. He had sauntered away.

The woman sat very still for the passage of several seconds. Then, as his footsteps continued to recede, she uttered a sharp sigh, braced herself, and rose.

For a moment she tottered and put out a groping hand, supporting herself against the framework of the window.

For a moment more she stood with closed eyes and twitching lips. Then firmly she controlled herself and passed down the steps into the magic moonlight.

The man's figure showed lounging on the balustrade of the terrace. He seemed to be gazing out over the orange groves to the sea. The breeze stirred the tops of some pine trees in the garden near at hand. The night was full of mystery, full of a subtle, poignant charm.

She reached him, gliding without sound over the stone on which his feet had echoed. She laid a white, thin hand upon his shoulder as he lounged.

"But what a night indeed, *mignone!*" she said.

He turned sharply and looked at her.

He was a straight, slight man, darkly handsome, with black moustache and imperial. His eyes shone out of his swarthy face with an amazing vitality.

For a space they regarded her critically,

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almost appraisingly. Then suddenly a flame of passion blazed up in them. He flung the cigar away.

"*Mia cára!*" he said, and stretched out eager hands to clasp her. For she was exquisite, there in the moonlight, lovely as a dream.

She yielded to his embrace, faintly smiling. She suffered his hot kisses upon her eyes and lips. But there was no answering passion in her surrender.

She was passive with the submission of the slave to the master. She accepted his fierce caresses without rapture.

"How cold you are!" he said, suddenly, his cheek pressed to hers.

She answered him in a low, throbbing voice that pleaded for understanding. "No, no, Gaspare *mio!* I am only waiting, dear, to open my heart to you."

"But why wait?" he said. "That heart is mine. Do I not reign in it alone?"

There was arrogance in words and tone. Plainly he was the master and expected to be treated as such.

She uttered a faint sigh, as of one who wrestles with a difficult problem. "Shall we go in?" she said, rather wistfully. "I—have something to show you."

"To-night?" He uttered the question with a certain sharpness. It was evident that he was accustomed to occupy the centre of the stage.

"The time goes so fast," she said, in her low, pleading voice. "I do not know how long you will be with me; but always, when you are gone, there remains so much that I had wanted to say to you."

He smiled a little, though not as if greatly pleased. "You were never a great talker, Lucia," he said. "And I—I have always held that between those who love, words are a waste of time."

"Unless there is something urgent to be said," she persisted. "You are always so good to me, Gaspare. You won't refuse to listen?"

"'IT IS HEAVEN ON EARTH,' A VOICE MADE ANSWER 'COME OUT, CARISSIMA! COME OUT AND JOIN ME!'"

He shrugged his shoulders slightly. "Have I ever refused you anything?"

She smiled with a hint of pathos. "I have always been so careful not to ask too much," she said.

"*Bueno!*" he rejoined. "A wise precaution, my Lucia! Now, what is it you have to show me? Something beautiful? I will not look at anything that is not beautiful to-night."

She caught her breath, as though repressing another sigh. "It is something very beautiful," she said.

He turned, his arm about her, and began to stroll back with her to the lighted window. His hand rested upon her wrist. Suddenly his fingers gripped it.

"You are thin, Lucia!" he said, in the tone of one making a complaint.

She started a little. "I was never stout," she murmured.

His black brows met. "You are getting bony," he said. "I do not like to feel your bones."

She put an arm about his neck. "Gaspare *mio*," she said, "beauty may pass, but love lasts for ever!"

His frown grew to a heavy scowl. "I worship —only beauty," he said.

They ascended the steps and entered the lighted room. She was panting a little. Her free hand pressed her side.

He looked at her again still more critically as the lamplight fell upon her face. A suspicious glitter came into his eyes. For a second or two he stood silent; then briefly, imperiously, he spoke.

"Go and take off the diamonds, and wash off the paint! I should like to see you—as you are."

She made a quick gesture of appeal. "Let me look my best for you, Gaspare! The time is so short. Let us make the most of it!"

He gave his head a curt, upward jerk. "Do as I say—*presto, presto!* No artificial flowers for me!"

She smiled rather piteously. "I never wear them for anyone else," she said.

And then, warned by the impatience of his attitude, she moved across the room and passed out by a door at the farther end.

The man, left to himself, fell to prowling to and fro, the scowl still on his face.

Time passed, and he began to tire of prowling. He stopped at last abruptly before a small writing-table in a corner by the window. A piece of blotting-paper lay there. He lifted it. Under it lay a photograph, face downwards.

His eyes narrowed, grew suddenly malignant. He picked up the photograph.

And then, "*Sapristi!*" he said, softly.

A face looked up to his—a laughing, provocative face that seemed to challenge him to mirth. Eyes from which the spirit of youth shone forth met his and chased the scowl from his face. The very incarnation of gaiety and joy took form and threw its spell upon his jaded senses.

"*Sapristi!*" the man murmured again, gazing fascinated. "It would be good to hear your laugh!"

Across one corner of the photograph were scrawled three words: "Your own Marjorie."

He spelt out the name, and said it over to himself: "Marjorie—Marjorie!"

Softly the door opened. He did not hear it. He was staring as one in a dream at the picture in his hand.

"Ah!" A low voice spoke at his shoulder. "You have found her!"

He turned sharply, and a swift exclamation escaped him. A woman dressed in black, very pale, with sunken eyes and a drawn, sad mouth, stood before him. The lines on her face were many and cruelly well-defined. It looked shrunken. She smiled at him rather piteously. "Do you know me, Gaspare?"

"Know you!" He stared. "Is it really you, Lucia?"

She nodded. "It is I myself."

Something like horror looked out of his eyes. "But—but—heavens, how old!" he ejaculated. "A mummy of womanhood!"

She made a slight gesture. "I was always older than you, Gaspare."

He drew back a step as if to avoid her touch. "No wonder I found you cold—tepid is the word! The fires have gone out—gone out!"

A hint of compassion came into her look. "I have given you a shock, *caro mio*," she said.

He passed a hand over his face and uttered a short laugh. "*Bueno!* It is over," he said. "Tell me now! Who is this?"

He turned again to the photograph with evident relief—a relief that was reflected momentarily in the woman's eyes as she made answer.

"That is Marjorie, Gaspare—my Marjorie."

He looked at her. "Your Marjorie? Your child?"

She bent her head. "Is she not charming?"

"But—your child!" he persisted, as if incredulous. "The child you went to see last summer? I thought it was—a young child—a child of nine—or ten."

She smiled faintly. "She was nearly ten when we first met, Gaspare."

He looked again at the photograph. "And now?" he questioned.

"Now she is eighteen." Softly the woman made answer; her eyes were fixed with his upon the laughing, pictured face.

"You amaze me!" he said.

There fell a short silence; then the man's mouth began to relax. It was almost impossible not to smile back at that merry, youthful face.

"Were you ever like that, Lucia?" he asked her.

She uttered a quick sigh. "A very, very long time ago, Gaspare."

He looked again at her, as if striving to trace some resemblance; but in a moment something like aversion came into his eyes. He turned them sharply away.

"She is eighteen, you say? Then she has left school?"

"She is to leave this summer." In a low voice she made answer.

"And then?" Curtly he threw the question.

Her eyes were upon him, earnestly, wistfully.

"That is what troubles me, Gaspare. I do not know what then."

He made a slight movement of impatience. "You desire to have her with you?"

Her sad eyes kindled. "Oh, if that were possible, Gaspare!" she said.

He frowned. "Is it not possible?"

She hesitated a moment; then: "That is what I want to talk to you about," she said. "Would it be possible for me to be with her just for a few weeks until—until something can be arranged for her future? Till now—till now —I have been able to support her through your generosity. But she is old enough now to support herself." A quick sigh escaped her. "And she is full of eagerness to begin. I am—so anxious for it to be—a right beginning, Gaspare."

The man's lips sneered. He threw the photograph down upon the table. "You mean you

"LET ME LOOK MY BEST FOR YOU, GASPARE! THE TIME IS SO SHORT. LET US MAKE THE MOST OF IT."

are anxious to secure—the right husband, my Lucia. That should not be difficult with a face like that. And doubtless—from your point of view—a husband is the more satisfactory. *Bueno*, if you wish to join her, you have my permission. Keep me informed of your movements, that is all; and the allowance will continue as usual."

He took out his cigarette-case with the words and turned with an arrogant gesture to the window.

The woman stood in silence for a few seconds, watching him. There was a strained look in her eyes, almost a yearning look.

At length, in a low voice, "How long can you spare me, Gaspare?" she said.

He jerked one shoulder. "Until the roses bloom again!" he said.

"Ah!" Her face contracted. "And if they never bloom?"

He did not look at her. He was gazing out into the night. "Then I will spare you for as long as that, my Lucia," he made light reply.

She bit her lip suddenly, as if at a sharp spasm of physical pain. "You are—something more than generous, Gaspare," she said.

He laughed a little, not over pleasantly.

"*Basta!* I pay for my pleasures," he said. "You have been—a good comrade."

A crimson flood of colour rushed swiftly over her face. "Say rather—a good servant, *mio conte!*" she said.

Something in the words reached him. He swung round on his heel and regarded her.

She straightened herself to meet his look. Shorn of her jewels and of all artificial charm, she yet was superb.

She stood before him with the majesty of a queen.

He stood looking at her, looking at her, with eyes that glowed with a half-reluctant admiration.

"So," he said, slowly, at last, "the fires have not quite gone out!"

She smiled. The colour was fading from her face, but her eyes still held his. "The fire of evening is sometimes redder than the rose of dawn, Gaspare," she said. "But I think you will always love the rose the best. Good night,

caro mio! And—thank you for your goodness to me—and mine!"

With the words she turned, took up the photograph that he had cast down, and calmly, regally, passed from the room.

There was finality in her going. When the door closed he knew that she would not return.

Yet for a space he stood, still gazing out before him with an odd discontent in his dark eyes. When at length he turned, it was with a movement almost of exasperation.

"*Bueno!*" he said, again. "It is over. The glory has departed!"

And with a shrug he went forth again through the window into the moonlit night.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEETING.

It was growing rapidly dark. The lights of the Paris express flared upon the windows, turning the landscape into a grey, drifting obscurity. And the girl who sat in the corner of a first-class carriage trying to discern every fleeting object uttered a sigh of impatience and turned her bright face inwards.

She looked very young, a mere child, with hair that hung in a thick gold plait to her waist. Her face was a merry one, with a beauty past disputing. She had the serene brow and clear blue eyes of perfect innocence And she addressed the carriage at large with the simplicity of one who had never known shyness or the need for self-restraint.

"Shall we ever get there, I wonder!" she said.

There were three other travellers in the compartment, an elderly French couple and an Englishman. The latter leaned in the corner facing her, a clean-shaven man, something under forty, with the grave, self-contained air of his race. It was he who lowered his paper to answer her.

"Oh, yes, we shall get there some day. Getting tired?"

She nodded. "Very tired now it's dark."

He smiled. His eyes were frank and kindly, such eyes as children trust. "I am afraid we sha'n't be there at present," he remarked. "Haven't you got anything to amuse you?"

"No, nothing" She leaned towards him conversationally. "If you don't want to read any more, we might talk," she said.

He looked momentarily surprised, but he laid his paper down, and leaned forward in his turn. "That's an idea. What shall we talk about? You? Or me?"

She laughed, a sudden, gay laugh that was irresistibly infectious. "I knew you were a funny man directly you got in. You have such a comic mouth."

"Really?" He laughed also in a quiet fashion the while his eyes observed her. "Then I am to be the topic of conversation, am I?"

She looked at him with engaging confidence.

"Do you do anything interesting, I wonder? No, don't tell me! I'll guess. I think you're a conjurer. Is that right?"

He shook his head. "Never did a conjuring trick in my life."

"Oh, didn't you? Then you're an actor—a clown, perhaps? I saw a clown once just like you."

"Really?" he said again. "I had no idea I had such a humorous cast of countenance. No, mademoiselle, I am not a clown. I make jokes sometimes, but no one ever laughs at 'em. They're not good enough to laugh at."

Her blue eyes flashed him a smile. "There are lots of people that can't see a joke, I know. For instance, once, when I was quite little, I dressed up as Bluebeard, and made love to Miss Frere—one of our governesses, a very plain creature. I wanted her to pretend to be Fatima, you know. But she didn't realize in the least what I was driving at. And she said I was very rude and indelicate." A little ripple of laughter came from the red lips.

Her listener was frankly smiling. "I know that sort of person," he said.

"Do you? Aren't they bores? They never have a good laugh at anything. They don't know how. And if you ever smile when you ought not—in church, for instance——" She paused. "I wonder why funny things are always so much funnier when they happen in church," she said, irrelevantly. "Have you ever noticed that?"

"Oh, yes, often," he said. "That's human nature. Some people might call it original sin. I really don't know why."

The gay face dimpled. "Some people always look on the dark side," she said. "I was nearly expelled once for laughing in church. But if you had seen Miss Frere's hair-net caught by the bonnet-trimming of the lady kneeling just behind her, wouldn't you have laughed? It was the funniest tug-of-war I ever saw."

"I'm sure I should have laughed," the man said.

"Yes, I'm sure you would." The merry eyes met his confidently. "But Miss Frere didn't. She was furious with me. But then she always hated me for some reason. That happened in the holidays, too, when there was never any fun."

"Oh!" said her listener, sympathetically. "Did you have to stay at school for the holidays? That was rough luck!"

"Wasn't it?" she said. "But it's all over now, and I'm never going back any more." Her eyes began to shine. "I'm going to my mother now. She is wonderful, quite wonderful. There is no one like her."

"Where does your mother live?" asked her new friend, with interest.

"Oh, she lives at a place called Bélleroche, in the Riviera, but she is going to meet me in Paris. That is why I am in such a hurry to get there. What time is it? Shall we be there soon?"

He looked at his watch. "I should say in about another half-hour. And what are you going to do when you get to Paris? Are you off to the Riviera too?"

"I don't know. I expect so. I don't suppose she will be able to stay away for long. You see,

she is secretary to an old Italian Count, and she doesn't get many holidays. She has only been to England to see me once in seven years, and that was last summer." Again the clear eyes kindled. "I did love it," she said, with a sigh. "And she is so lovely. You can't think how lovely she is."

"Perhaps I can guess," he said, looking at her with a smile.

She shook her head. "Oh, no, you couldn't. She is like pictures of the Madonna, with that kind of still beauty that makes one sad. I wish you could meet her——" She broke off with sudden confidence. "Are you going to stay in Paris?"

He nodded. "For a night or two—yes."

"Oh, are you? Where are you going to stay? My mother is at the Hôtel St. Rémy, in the Rue Chassereau. I suppose you are not going there by any chance?"

He smiled. "No; I am going to the Louvre."

"What a pity!" she said. "But perhaps it isn't very far away? I hope it isn't. Wouldn't you like to tell me your name? Then I can tell my mother all about you."

He was still smiling. "My name is Hugo Quentin," he said. "And yours?"

She opened her eyes to their widest extent.

"Not—not really?"

"Why not?" he said.

She began to laugh. "Because—do you know—my name is Quentin too! I am Marjorie Quentin."

The man's eyes opened also. He looked at her hard. "By Jove!" he said.

"Isn't that funny?" she laughed. "I wonder if we are related. But we can't be, because I haven't got any relations."

"Haven't you?" he said. He was still looking at her very intently. "You're not—I suppose you can't be—Dermot's daughter?"

She leaned nearer to him eagerly. "Dermot? Yes—that was my father's name! He—was a great astronomer."

"Yes, that was the man. He used to be called the Star-gazer. He was my father's first cousin." Hugo Quentin spoke slowly, his eyes still closely observant of the bright face before him.

She clapped her hands together. "Then we are related! We really are! What fun! But I always thought that I had no relations. What relationship would you call it?"

His face relaxed a little. "I should say second cousins. And you are right. You haven't many relations. I am about the only one left."

Marjorie was deeply interested. "But did you know my father? Do tell me about him! I know so little."

"I can't say I knew him. I met him a few times. He wasn't young, you know. He married late in life."

"He was very, very clever, wasn't he?" asked Marjorie.

"I believe he was—immensely clever. He was considered quite an authority in his own line. He used to be constantly travelling to different spots of the globe to see eclipses, new stars, and so on."

"What fun!" laughed Marjorie. "And did my mother go with him? I suppose you have met my mother?"

He shook his head. "No, I never met her. I don't fancy she went with him very often, but I really don't know. I can't tell you anything about her."

"I expect I know more than you do," said Marjorie. "She is very beautiful. Her portrait was hung in the Salon one year. She was years younger than my father. You know, it was very odd, but he didn't leave a penny when he died. I suppose he spent it all on his pilgrimages. And my mother has had to work for us both ever since. She has been secretary to this Italian count for years—all the time that I have been at school. We have never been able to see each other because she has had to live abroad. Only last summer she came over for three little weeks, and we went to the seaside together. That was the first time I had seen her in seven years, and she had to go back to her horrid old count then before the holidays were over."

"And what are you going to do now?" asked Hugo Quentin. He was watching her gravely; there was almost a touch of severity about his question.

But she did not notice it. Her answer came blithely, with the sublime carelessness of youth. "Oh, I don't know yet. That has got to be decided. I had to leave the school because it has been given up. Perhaps I shall go and live with the count too."

Quentin made a sharp movement and dropped his paper on the floor. She stooped for it quickly before he could pick it up.

"Thanks, child! Don't trouble!" he said.

She looked at him. "What's the matter?"

He lifted his brows slightly. "Matter?"

"You look shocked at something," Marjorie explained.

He smiled at her again kindly, but his eyes remained serious. "I was thinking that you are rather young to be travelling by yourself."

Marjorie laughed. "Guess how old I am!"

"Fifteen next birthday," said Hugo Quentin, without the smallest hesitation.

She threw up her chin with a delighted gesture. "You are quite wrong! I shall be twenty-five. And you?"

"I am thirty-seven," he said.

"Oh, you shouldn't have told me!" she protested. "I was just going to guess twenty-six. Isn't it fun to have met like this? You can't imagine how pleased I am. Now you will come and see my mother, won't you? I do think you might put up at the Hôtel St. Rémy."

"Do you?" he said. "Well, do you know, I am beginning to think the same thing."

She reached out an impulsive hand. "Are you? That is nice of you!"

He took the hand, looking at her with friendly eyes that yet remained serious. "I think I shall have to keep an eye on you, Marjorie," he said. "Paris isn't a particularly nice place for little girls to be running about alone in."

"Women of five-and-twenty," corrected Marjorie, with her merry eyes laughing into his.

He smiled a little at the amendment. "Young women who make friends with men in railway-carriages," he said.

She laughed again. "Is that why you have been looking so shocked? I knew there was something. But, of course, I shouldn't have spoken to you if you hadn't looked—nice."

He made her a grave bow. "Thank you, *ma cousine!* But I think it might be well for you to remember that things—and people—are not always what they seem."

"Meaning that you are not nice?" suggested Marjorie, with her gay little tilt of the chin.

"No," said Hugo Quentin. "Meaning that you are very young and inexperienced, and you don't know much of the world."

She threw him a flashing smile. "I know. It's ridiculous at my age. I'm going to set to work now and learn—all there is to know."

But Quentin shook his head. "No, don't!" he said. "You're much happier as you are."

Her blue eyes widened, grew softer, more remote. "But I've got to learn, you know," she said. "All I've ever learnt till now came out of books. I want to know—real things."

But he still looked discouraging. "You'll learn fast enough," he said. "Don't be in too much of a hurry!"

The merry mouth began to smile again.

"Cousin Hugo," said Marjorie, "I'm sure—quite sure—that you'll be—an old maid!"

He broke into a laugh, as if against his will. "I shouldn't wonder," he said.

CHAPTER II.

THE ARRIVAL.

"I QUITE thought she would be at the station to meet me," said Marjorie. "It's lucky for me you're here. I don't know what I should have done if you hadn't been."

"I think you would have felt rather lost," Hugo said.

They sat in the dark depths of a *fiacre* and jolted over the Paris stones.

Marjorie was not quite so talkative as she had been. The arrival at the great Paris terminus with no familiar face to welcome her had somewhat dashed her high spirits. She had accepted her new-found cousin's proffered guardianship without an instant's hesitation, almost as a matter of course, but her lighthearted gaiety had died down. She was evidently feeling a little forlorn.

"I suppose you know Paris well?" she said.

"Moderately well," said Hugo. "I have been over twice before on business. I am a partner in a firm of silk mercers."

"Oh, are you? That sounds dull," said Marjorie. "Do you like it?"

He laughed a little. "I never asked myself that question. I used to think I'd be an actor once, and I believe I could have done it too. But the gods decreed otherwise. I've no doubt they knew best."

"What a shame!" said Marjorie, sympathetically. "I thought you looked that sort."

She slipped a friendly little hand on to his knee, and gave it a soft pat.

The action was absolutely simple and child-like, but the man beside her gave a slight start. And then very kindly he took the little hand and held it for a moment.

Marjorie's forlornness was gone on the instant. "It is so nice to have you to talk to," she said. "It's silly to be anxious, isn't it? But I am—just a little. What shall I do if my mother isn't there?"

"Never meet troubles half-way!" he said. "Ah! We're just getting there!"

The crazy *fiacre* had turned into a quiet side-street. It turned again as he spoke under an old archway, and rattled into a stone-paved yard.

Marjorie began to tremble. As they stopped before a brightly-lighted doorway she spoke, her voice very low and agitated. "I feel as if—as if I want to run away."

"Oh, stick to it!" he said, kindly. "I'm here."

He opened the door and descended, and helped her out. An obsequious porter came forward to receive them and take charge of the luggage. Quentin paid the driver, and led the way within.

Several men were lounging smoking in the vestibule, and all of them turned to view the new arrivals. One of them—a slight man, with an olive complexion and insolent dark eyes—arose after a brief scrutiny of the girl, and intercepted Hugo on his way to the office.

"Pardon me!" he said. "Is this *demoiselle* Miss Quentin?"

It was Marjorie who answered quickly, eagerly. "Yes—yes. That is my name. Is my mother here?"

He looked at her in a fashion that made Hugo Quentin draw his brows together; then, before any interference was possible, he made her a deep bow and spoke.

"I am enchanted to make your acquaintance, *signorina*. No, I regret to inform you that your mother is not here. She has been taken ill. Otherwise, she would have met you. I have come in her place."

"My mother—ill?" Marjorie's eyes grew wide with dismay. "Oh, do take me to her!" she begged, impulsively. "What is the matter?"

He hesitated momentarily, and Hugo Quentin saw his opportunity and took it. "I am this lady's cousin," he said, quietly. "She is under my escort. My name is Quentin also. May I know whom I have the honour to address?"

Marjorie turned a flushed face of protest towards him, but she said nothing, though she was quivering with impatience.

The stranger executed another bow. "I bear the name of Voltano," he said.

"Conte di Voltano," said Hugo, in the same quiet tone.

The other flashed him a swift glance, and drew himself up with a haughty gesture. "Have you any fault to find?" he demanded.

The Englishman's grey eyes met his with level directness. "It concerns me only in so far as it concerns my cousin," he said. "Perhaps now

you will be good enough to tell us where her mother is to be found."

The Italian's eyes flashed round upon the girl waiting in a feverish silence at Hugo's side. "I shall give myself the pleasure of conducting the *signorina* to her," he said, in his precise, slightly foreign accents. "Your responsibility, *signor*, is now over. Her mother has placed her in my exclusive charge."

A faint flush rose to Hugo's forehead. He turned, without an instant's pause, to Marjorie. "I think you would prefer to have me with you," he said.

Marjorie was quivering with suspense. She looked at him imploringly. "If the count can take me straight to my mother I sha'n't need—to trouble you——" she began, haltingly.

"That is the point," Hugo said, and quiet though his voice remained, it held the utmost decision. "You would like to know where your mother is, would you not?"

"Oh, please!" said Marjorie. "Please!" She could not understand the very obvious hostility that had manifested itself between the two men; but it distressed her less than her anxiety on her mother's account. She could scarcely think of anything else. She turned with great earnestness to the Italian. "Please take me to her!" she begged him. "I will come with you now—now!"

He glanced at Hugo with malicious triumph in his dark eyes. "As you will, *signorina*," he said. "The *fiacre* is still there. And she is in sore need of you."

"Marjorie!" Hugo's voice fell suddenly short and stern. He laid his hand upon the girl's arm, holding her. "If you are going with this—this gentleman, I am coming with you."

"Pardon me, *signor!* That is impossible!" The Italian cut his words even more briefly; they came from between his teeth. "I have her mother's precise instructions. They do not include you. I question if she has ever even heard of you."

He looked Hugo up and down with a stare of hard insolence. They were rapidly becoming the centre of attention in the vestibule. But, notwithstanding his British dread of publicity, Hugo stood his ground.

"She will not go without me," he said, doggedly.

"Hugo!" Pantingly Marjorie uttered his name. "Cousin Hugo, please, please let me go! I will come back again, I promise. Only—only I must go to her. She is wanting me."

"You shall go," he made firm reply, "if I go with you; not otherwise."

"She will not, *signor!*" Furiously the Italian flung him open defiance. "The *signora* will not receive you. She quarrelled with your family years ago. The *signorina* will go without you, or not at all!"

But still Hugo remained unmoved, his hand yet holding Marjorie's arm "She will not go without me," he reiterated.

Marjorie cast a despairing glance into his calm face. "Cousin Hugo, I must go."

"Certainly," he said. "But—I shall escort you."

"And why?" The Italian was almost stuttering with rage. He looked as if he would strike Hugo.

The Englishman's steady eyes comprehended him and passed him by. "That," he said, "is one of the questions that are better left unanswered."

The count snarled at him inarticulately, gnawing his moustache.

Marjorie shrank a little at the sight. Almost instinctively she drew nearer to Hugo. "Will he—will he—tell us?" she whispered.

"No, *signorina!*" Fiercely, violently, the count flung the words, articulating with difficulty. "I will not tell you! Your mother is ill. *Sapristi!* She may be dying. But she shall not have her husband's family forced upon her in her last hours. I will take you to her, yes, if you will come alone. But—I do not give you her address! That English dog shall not go also."

Marjorie had turned very white. She almost looked as if she would faint. "I must go," she whispered to Hugo. "Indeed, I must go."

But Hugo stood like a rock. "He is not a fit person for you to go with," he said. "His behaviour is more than sufficient proof of that."

She did not attempt to contradict him. Possibly her own instinct told her the same. But her distress drove her beyond all reasoning.

"But what can I do?" she protested. "My own mother ill—and wanting me! Hugo, think!"

"She would not want you to go with this man," said Hugo, briefly.

Marjorie looked at him with agonized eyes. It was the first time that actual trouble had ever touched her gay young life.

"I don't know what to do," she said, piteously.

The count was looking at her with compelling eyes. He suddenly braced himself to return to the attack. "How long have you known this—gentleman?" he asked her, with a sneer.

She looked at Hugo swiftly. "Not—not long," she admitted.

"How long?" he insisted. "A week? A day? An hour?"

She avoided his look. "About—an hour," she said.

He broke into a laugh. "*Sapristi!* And you place him first—before your mother?"

The thrust went home. Marjorie recoiled before it in sudden, burning confusion. Almost in spite of herself she sought to free her arm from Hugo's hold. There was something quite intolerable in the Italian's laugh. It pierced her like a flaming sword.

"You are not going," Hugo said, quickly and sternly.

"I must," she said.

"You shall not." He held her fast in a grip that made her wince.

"But—but—Cousin Hugo!" she pleaded.

"You shall not," he said again.

"He has no right over you," said the Italian, speaking through his teeth, "no powers what

"'YOU ARE NOT GOING,' SAID HUGO, QUICKLY AND STERNLY."

ever, except such as you choose to give him. It is for you to choose."

She looked from one to the other in desperation.

"No," Hugo said, with quietness. "You have no choice. I have a right. I have powers. And I mean to exercise them. Marjorie, come with me!"

His hand began to draw her. Against her will she yielded.

The Italian raised his shoulders. "And leave your mother to die alone? *Bueno!* The choice is yours."

That moved her. With a sharp cry she wrenched herself away. "Oh, I will come! I will come!" she told him, hysterically. "Take me to her now—now!"

Five seconds later Hugo Quentin stood alone in the vestibule with a pale, set face—the centre of observation, watched by a score of curious eyes.

He displayed no discomfiture or agitation of any kind. He had been temporarily worsted, but complete defeat was a thing he would never acknowledge. After a very brief pause for consideration he turned and with the utmost composure left the hotel.

CHAPTER III.

THE OATH.

In the white villa above the bay, curtained by its cedar trees, the green shutters were drawn and all was very still. The glare of the sun on the dancing water below was almost intolerable, for high summer was drawing near. But the little white villa on its terrace above the village of Belleroche had shut out all the glare. It had a mysterious look, as though it habitually veiled itself from the glances of the curious. The shutters were never lifted before sunset.

The garden that surrounded it was a blaze of flowers and loud with the hum of bees. Climbing roses were everywhere, trailing from pillars along the terrace, smothering the porch. They were the embroidery to the veil. They helped to screen.

All along the terrace there ran a gorgeous border of belladonna lilies, deeply pink, all their faces turned to the sun. They seemed to Hugo Quentin reminiscent of a face he had recently seen and marvelled at—a face all flushed with the rose of youth, the dawn of life.

He passed the shuttered window with the steps that led up to it, and reached the portico. Behind him, far below the terraced garden, the

waves were splashing merrily on the beach. The cheery sound came strangely through the almost ominous hush that pervaded this jealously-screened place. Even the humming of the bees seemed almost an intrusion.

He knocked on the closed white door, and stood patiently in the sweltering heat, waiting for admittance.

Several seconds elapsed before he heard any movement in response. Then there came a slow, heavy tread and the door opened a few inches. A face that looked as if it were made out of brown paper peered forth—the face of an old, old woman. The eyes, incredibly bright, like the eyes of a monkey, looked the visitor up and down.

Hugo, being no linguist, tackled the situation at once in plain English, hoping for the best. "Mrs. Quentin lives here, I believe? Is she at home?"

The beady eyes continued to travel up and down him at baffling speed, but the mouth, sunken yet hard, remained uncompromisingly closed. Hugo felt that in another moment the door would be shut in his face.

But, having travelled so far, he had no intention of being sent empty away. He took a five-franc piece from his pocket, laid it with a smile upon his card, and offered both in silence.

The magic worked, as he had foreseen. A claw-like hand received the offering, and with a brief nod the brown face disappeared.

He resumed his patient waiting with the air of one to whom time is not of the smallest consequence. There were very few people in the world who had ever seen Hugo Quentin lose patience. At last there came again the heavy tread; the door was opened wider in a tacit invitation to him to enter. He stepped within, and at once it closed upon him.

He found himself standing in a cool, dark passage, so bereft of the glare without that for a space he stared about him, seeing nothing. Then, at length, his eyes growing accustomed to the dark, he saw his guide beckoning him imperiously to follow.

He did so, listening instinctively for the sound of a girlish voice, the tread of a girl's light feet. But he listened in vain. No sound of any sort reached him, save the unromantic tramp of the old servant in front of him, and in a moment or two the opening of a door in the gloom. A few muffled words were spoken, and then the figure in front stood back, ushering him forward.

He entered a room that was filled with a green twilight from the rays that filtered in from without through the drawn shutters. It came to him with an odd feeling of shock that it was like stepping into a grave not yet wholly filled in. The atmosphere had a vault-like stillness that smote coldly on the senses.

He glanced around him expectantly, still half-hoping to hear a fresh young voice raised in welcome. But again he was disappointed. No greeting reached him. His eyes found and dwelt upon the only occupant of the room—a woman like the picture of a Madonna, who sat still in a great easy-chair, and looked at him, looked at him, with eyes that seemed to search his soul.

She was the first to speak, and that after a considerable silence, during which he sought in vain for words. For there was something terrible in that quiet room, something tragic that demanded the most elemental simplicity. It was no moment for the lighter conventionalities of life.

"Come in!" she said, her voice so low and hollow that again he thought of the half-open grave. "It was good of you to come. I have been hoping—praying—that you might, though the chance seemed so small—so small. Ah, well, I know now—I know now—that God answers prayer, if—if only one can pray hard enough."

She stopped, and he was aware of a hand held out to him—a trembling, impotent hand.

"You are Hugo Quentin," she said; "my Marjorie's cousin. You already know who—and what—I am."

The words pierced him with a deep compassion. He took the quivering hand and held it. "You are Marjorie's mother," he said; and after a moment: "Can you give me any news of her?"

"Yes, she is here." She answered him in the same low voice; it almost seemed as if she feared the exertion of raising it. Her sunken eyes were lifted to his, imploring him. "She told me about you, how kind you had been. He—the count—brought her straight here."

"I gathered that he would," said Hugo, with a touch of grimness, "after what passed."

"Yes." Still she looked up at him with that mute entreaty in her eyes. "I was taken ill—too ill to meet her, as I had intended. He—the count—came down unexpectedly, and he offered—to go in my place. I had no one else to send. I had no choice but to let him go. I did not know—I could not guess—that you would be there."

She was pleading with him, pleading against harsh judgment, striving piteously to range him on her side. He realized it, and his hardness went from him. He drew a chair to her side, and sat down.

"Of course not," he said. "It was by the most amazing chance that we met."

"Ah! I do not believe in chance." Almost under her breath she answered him. "All my life I have been—an unbeliever. But now—now with the night drawing on—I am beginning to see—as I have never seen before. Someone is holding up a light to me in the darkness. Someone is guiding me." She paused, panting, her hand pressed tightly over her heart. Then with obvious effort: "It was not—chance—that sent you to—my Marjorie," she said. "Nor was it chance that made you follow her here."

"It was not," Hugo agreed.

She laid her wasted hand upon his arm. "Oh, how good it is," she said, "to speak once more with an honest English gentleman! Do you know you remind me of my husband—of Dermot?"

"My own impression of Dermot was that he was a fool," said Hugo, with quiet decision.

Her hand pressed upon him. "But he was safe," she said; "he was honourable. I—I was far the greater fool of the two. For I had all the world in my grasp, and I could have turned it into a paradise. And I threw it all away for a dream, an illusion, a bubble full of emptiness. Well, it is over. The chance will never be mine again. I sowed tares instead of wheat, and now I am reaping my harvest." Her beautiful face quivered, but in a moment she controlled it. "That brings me to what I want to say to you," she said. "Forgive me if I seem abrupt, but the time is so short—so short. It is right that I should suffer. I deserve it, God knows. And I can bear it. But, oh, He must not—surely He will not—visit my sin upon my little one. That is my one dread now. If that were taken away, then I could die in peace—die gladly." Again she paused, and he saw her throat working; she put up a hand to still it. "I tell myself," she whispered, "that that is why you have been sent—to—to—save her from evil. Your eyes are so straight and clear. I think you carry pride of family in your heart—like Dermot—poor Dermot—whom I dishonoured. Do you know—she is here—here in the very midst of evil, and she has not seen it? She is untouched as yet—my Marjorie, my rose of dawn. Her eyes have not been opened. She has not seen—the serpent in the garden. But he is there, waiting for her—waiting for her. And when I am gone, who will protect her? Mr. Quentin—Hugo—will you save her?"

Her voice rose upon a note of anguish. She leaned forward in her chair, clasping his arm, gazing piteously, beseechingly, into his face. There was Death in her eyes, and he saw it; the shadow of the falling night seemed to hover all about her.

And because of that shadow he answered her instantly, swiftly, as if reaching water to one dying of thirst. "Of course I will save her. You do not need to ask."

"Ah!" She drew a hard breath and sank back, as though the sudden relief were almost too much for her.

For a space there was no sound save her laboured and uneven breathing. Hugo sat motionless beside her, perfectly quiet and free from agitation, waiting for her to grow calmer.

When at length she spoke again he turned towards her with steady attention. There was no hint of strain in his demeanour, nothing to indicate that he had just undertaken a responsibility from which a good many men might have shrunk in dismay. His eyes were gravely kind as they rested upon her.

"You are good!" she said. "Oh, you are good! I used to scoff at goodness. I know now—what it is really worth."

The flicker of a smile crossed his face, touching the humorous lines about his mouth with a hint of irony. "I have been told I am too nondescript to be anything else," he said. "Believe me, I am not remarkable in any way. But you can certainly trust me. I make rather a point of being trustworthy."

"I am sure of it," she said, earnestly. "You carry it in your face. Because of it I am tempted—I am greatly tempted—to ask one thing more of you. Dare I ask it, I wonder? Dare I presume still further upon your goodness—your charity?"

"I will do anything in my power," he said.

"You will," she answered. "I know you will." And for the first time a measure of relief was in her voice. "It is this. She is as innocent as the day. She has not the faintest suspicion of—of—her mother's sin. I have always called myself the count's secretary, and she believes it. Will you let her go on in ignorance? I feel that I shall know; wherever I am I shall know. She believes in me now. Oh, let her always believe in me! Never let her know! Never let her suspect!"

Hugo was looking at her with his straight, unvarying eyes. "She shall never know," he said, "if I can prevent it."

There was resolution in his tone. He spoke as a man whose word was his bond. And as she heard him great tears welled suddenly in her eyes and rolled down her drawn face. She did not speak, but in those tears there was more than gratitude.

Again for a space there was silence between them. The man sat with that absolute impassivity that seemed characteristic of him. He did not appear to be thinking very deeply, but there was self-reliance in his pose. There was no element of rashness in the action he had taken. If he acted upon impulse, he had the gift of seeing clearly whither the impulse would lead.

He spoke after a time perfectly naturally, as if discussing a perfectly natural state of affairs. "If you really wish to preserve the child's innocence, there seems to be only one course open to you."

"Ah!" The word escaped her like a cry of pain. "You mean—I must send her away!"

"No. I did not mean that. I had not thought of that." He spoke contemplatively, almost as if he wished to eliminate the personal aspect altogether. "No. I meant the count. You ought to tell him to go."

"I!" Utter astonishment was in her voice. She gazed at him incredulously.

He met her look calmly. "I am quite willing to tell him—on your behalf."

She gave a gasp. "Impossible!" she said.

"You mean the place is his?"

"Everything is his! I am his!"

Hugo raised his eyebrows slightly. "Not irrevocably, I think," he said.

"You are wrong." Her voice sounded flat and tired. "I gave myself to him—unconditionally—long ago. I am his until he finally throws me aside."

Hugo made a brief gesture with one hand, as if he shook off some emotion before it could take a firm hold. "Can't you send the scoundrel about his business?" he said, in a low voice. "I will provide for you."

She shook her head without speaking.

"For the child's sake!" he urged.

But the hopelessness in her eyes silenced all

persuasion. "I could not face it now," she said. "I am too ill—too tired. All that I can do is to place her in your keeping. And—and if you think she ought to leave me; if you think"—she hesitated momentarily—"that she is in any danger, take her—in Heaven's name—take her away!"

"I am afraid I do think that," Hugo said, steadily.

She made an anguished gesture, but it was of surrender rather than appeal. "Do—whatever you think best!" she said.

He looked at her, and there was open pity in the look. "I shall have to ask you to help me," he said.

"I will do all that is in my power," she answered.

"Thank you," he said. "Then will you tell her that you have appointed me her guardian—being the only member of her family left? And tell her that my business obliges me to go back to England, and you wish her to accompany me. Can you do this?"

She bent her head. Again her throat was working spasmodically. "I will do it," she said.

"Thank you," he said again. "You are placing her unreservedly in my care, and I appreciate the honour done me. I will do my very utmost—always—to be worthy of it."

He spoke solemnly; but he looked at her no longer. There was that about her at the moment that made him avert his eyes instinctively.

But in a second her hand groped outwards, seeking his. "And you will be—good—to her?" she whispered, brokenly.

He took the hand and pressed it. "I will be good to her," he said, and added in a lower tone, "so help me, God!"

In the silence that followed there was something sacred, and by that silence, even more than by his oath, Marjorie's mother knew that this man would keep his word.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SACRIFICE.

A PEAL of girlish laughter rang along the terrace, and Hugo rose at last to take his leave. He had been sitting in that chamber of green twilight for more than an hour.

"I will not stay now," he said. "You will tell her all that is necessary. I shall come for her this evening. You say the count will be at the Casino?"

"He may be. I do not say he will be. He is always uncertain."

She spoke with her face turned towards the window. He saw that she was straining her ears to catch another sound of that gay young voice.

He bent slightly towards her. "I gather that you have not told her of the gravity of your illness?"

She met his eyes, recalling herself with an effort. "No—no! She thinks that I am better."

"Then let her continue to think so—if you can!" Hugo said, gently. "It will make things easier."

She smiled, a quivering, piteous smile.

"Yes, you are right. I will play the game—to the end. Good-bye, my friend!"

Her fingers held his hand lingeringly; it seemed as if she wanted to say more. But no words came. Her hold relaxed.

He straightened himself and turned to the door, just as it opened to admit Marjorie.

She came in swiftly, bringing a breath of the flowers and the sunshine with her.

"Oh, mother mine, I have had such a time. The count and I have walked miles. He wanted just to laze on the beach, but I wouldn't let him. He has promised to take me to the Casino to-night. Why—why—you!" suddenly perceiving Hugo in the gloom. "How ever did you get here?"

He held out his hand to her. "I came after you by the next train," he said. "I wanted to see your mother."

She looked at him for a moment half-doubtfully before she laid her hand in his. "I am sorry I left you so suddenly the other night," she said, then, "You see, I was anxious."

"I quite understand," said Hugo.

Her clear eyes regarded him with more confidence. "I didn't mean to be rude," she said. "And—I don't think the count realized that we were related. I explained it all to him afterwards. He knows now."

"I am glad of that," said Hugo, dryly.

Her brows contracted a little. She looked puzzled. But the next instant she turned to her mother, seeming to dismiss the matter.

"How are you, dearest? I hope you haven't been lonely. I wondered—afterwards—if we ought to have gone so far."

"No, dear. I have not been lonely." Her mother's reply was very quiet, her tone so ordinary that Hugo marvelled. "Where is the count now?" she asked.

"He has gone in to write a letter. I offered to do it for him," laughed Marjorie, "as you were not up to it. But he said if I had anything to do with it, it would never get written. So I left him to do it himself."

Her mother did not smile at the naive words. She was leaning back, with eyes half-closed. "Your Cousin Hugo is just leaving, dear," she said. "Will you see him off? And then come back to me!"

"Oh, are you going?" said Marjorie, turning back to him. "What a shame! But you'll come again, of course?"

"Thank you," Hugo said. "I will."

She smiled at him, still with that tinge of doubt in her eyes. "I can't believe it is only two days since I saw you last," she said. "You don't look a bit the same."

He raised his brows slightly. "I am the same," he said.

"Then it is I that have changed," she returned. "It seems such years ago since we met in the train and I told you all about poor old Miss Frere; and then that horrid fright in Paris about my mother." She drew a deep breath. "And, after all—to get here and find there wasn't much the matter! I can't tell you what a relief it was.

And now I'm having such a glorious time. You can't imagine what a kind man the count is. He thinks of everything."

She paused, and there was a moment's silence. Then, "I think I really ought to go," Hugo said. "Your mother will be tired out."

Marjorie turned to the door. Something in his manner made her feel oddly embarrassed. There was a suggestion of severity about him which she could not fathom.

They passed out under the climbing roses. "Don't come out into the sun again!" he said.

She stopped at once, her frank eyes raised to his. "Are you still feeling vexed with the count?" she said. "I am dreadfully sorry he was rude to you, particularly as he isn't in the least like that, really. I was prejudiced myself at first; but one has to make allowances for a foreigner, don't you think?"

Hugo looked at her for a moment in silence, and then the kindly lines came back into his face. "No," he said. "I don't think so in this case, Marjorie. But never mind that now! Go back to your mother! She has something to say to you."

Marjorie watched him go with a thoughtful look in her eyes. Instinct told her that he was a man to be trusted, but yet that sensation of doubt lingered. He had worn an expression that was almost grim when she had first entered her mother's room, and she could not understand it. With a feeling of uneasiness that almost amounted to foreboding, she turned to go back.

She re-entered the room in which her mother sat with less elasticity than before, and dropped into the chair that Hugo had vacated with a little sigh.

"What did he come for, dear?" she asked.

Her mother laid a very tender hand upon her. "My Marjorie," she said, "I will tell you. Hugo Quentin is a rich man—a very rich man, and he knows that I—have nothing. I am living on—on charity."

"But you earn what the count gives you," said Marjorie, quickly.

"No, dear. I don't. I am earning nothing, and I have saved nothing. Hugo knows that. And—he knows that you, too, are dependent in the same way. He is very good, Marjorie. Being related to you, he regards himself as responsible for you. He has offered to provide for you, to become your guardian. And, my child, I have accepted his offer."

"Mother!" Marjorie sat suddenly upright, her cheeks burning.

Her mother's hand pressed upon her very gently and persuasively. "Dear, there is no other way. It has troubled me more than I can say—the thought of you and of your future. I cannot ask the count to keep you. You would not wish that yourself. But Hugo is different. He is a relative, and he has promised me that he will take care of you. He is a good man, Marjorie. You may trust him absolutely."

"Oh, but, mother—mother!" Sharp distress sounded in the girl's voice; she leaned forward, her vivid face full of protest. "He can't take care of me. I belong to you—to you. I am not going to leave you!"

Her mother's hand travelled upwards to her bright hair, soothing, caressing. "I never meant to keep you with me, my darling; and this chance is too good to refuse. You will accept it for my sake, Marjorie. It is to set my mind at rest"

"Then he wants—he really wants—to take me—away!" There was almost a note of panic in Marjorie's voice; she clung to her mother suddenly and convulsively. "Oh, dearest, I've only just got here!" she pleaded. "I can't—I can't—leave you again—yet!"

"I know it is hard." The thin arms went round her, pressing her close. "Life is like that, my Marjorie. It is full of sorrows. We think ourselves happy, but it does not last, it cannot last. Yes, you must leave me. He cannot stay, and he has offered to take you back with him, to give you a home, to look after you as I never can. Marjorie darling, for my sake, because of your love for me, don't make difficulties! Do this thing with a brave heart! It isn't as if we had ever been together for any length of time."

"But I thought—I thought I should be with you always now," whispered Marjorie. "Why can't I be the count's secretary instead of you? I should soon learn. I am sure he would agree. Let me run and ask him, dearest! Please let me!"

"No, Marjorie!" Her mother's arms tightened upon her, holding her fast. "It is out of the question. The count—is a very violent-tempered man. You wouldn't be happy, dear, and I—should be miserable. No, believe me, Hugo's offer is the only thing for you, and it would be madness to refuse it. Go with him, child, for my sake! I shall know then that you are safe."

"But, mother, how can I—how can I leave you? And I am perfectly safe here. I am not afraid of the count. In fact—in fact, I believe he likes having me. Mother, dear"—keen distress was in Marjorie's voice—"you can't—want—me to go?"

"I do, Marjorie, darling." Very tenderly the mother made answer. "I can't tell you what it means to me to feel that you will be safely provided for in the days to come. It is the one thing I desire before all others. It is the one thing I have prayed for."

"And I am to go away—back to England—with Cousin Hugo—and not to see you or the count any more?" Marjorie suddenly withdrew herself to gaze at her mother with eyes of hurt wonder.

But on the instant her mother's arms drew her back again. "Do you think it is easy for me, my darling?" she said, and there was a sound of heart-break in her voice. "But, oh, Marjorie—Marjorie—it is the only way. I beg you, I implore you, to take it. You will regret it all your life if you don't. And I—I think it will kill me."

There fell a silence—a silence of amazement, of non-comprehension on the girl's part, of agonized suspense on the mother's.

Then, with a soft but resolute movement,

Marjorie drew herself away again. "All right, dear," she said, her voice very low and still. "I'll go. When do you want me to start?"

"He has to leave to-night," her mother said. She suffered her arms to fall, for Marjorie did not seem to want them any more.

goes alone. I do not wish him to know that you are going before you are actually gone."

"Mother, why?" Marjorie was standing before her, very slim and straight. Her young face looked strangely stern.

"I can't tell you why," her mother said.

"SUDDENLY HE LIFTED THE GOLDEN PLAIT AND PUT IT TO HIS LIPS."

"To-night!" A hint of surprise was audible in the word, but no protest followed it. Marjorie got to her feet. "Very well," she said. "To-night, then."

"And, Marjorie"—her mother looked up at her with eyes of piteous longing; the struggle was over, but she felt that it had wounded the child to the heart—"one thing more. You said that the count had promised to take you to the Casino to-night. I want you to let that arrangement stand till the last moment, and then to change your mind and stay with me. Even if he is vexed, I want you to do this, so that he

"You are afraid that he would not wish me to go—that he would quarrel with Hugo?"

"Perhaps."

Her mother's voice was unvaryingly gentle, but it held a great weariness.

There fell a pause. Then very slowly Marjorie turned to go. All the youth, all the gaiety, seemed to have died out of her. "Very well," she said again.

She moved to the door, opened it, passed slowly out.

Her mother watched her go, sitting motionless in the darkened room. But as the door closed

something seemed to break within her. She uttered a smothered cry and sank forward.

"Oh, Marjorie!" she sobbed. "My Marjorie!"—and burst into an agony of tears.

CHAPTER V.

THE WHEELS OF DESTINY.

"I AM very sorry, count." Marjorie stood framed in the window that overlooked the sea. Her face was pale, her eyes troubled.

The bay lay spread below them, a sheet of silver in the moonlight. Her look dwelt upon it wistfully.

The count leaned against the woodwork. His eyes saw her, and her alone. "Your mother needs you, you say?" he questioned.

She bent her head and answered "Yes."

The lamplight flashed upon her golden hair. He reached out a slim, brown hand, and took the long plait that hung to her waist, caressing it softly between his fingers.

"*Bueno!*" he said. "If you stay, I stay also."

She glanced at him, smiling faintly as she noted his occupation. "No. You mustn't stay too. Why should you?"

"To be near you, *signorina*," he said, with a flash of his dark eyes.

"But if I am with my mother——" said Marjorie, and paused.

He laughed softly. "Then you will be able to spare me a minute now and then. I shall stay for those minutes."

She shook her head. "No, that is just it. I sha'n't be able to do that."

His look became indulgent. "*Bueno!*" he said again. "There is to-morrow."

She made a slight gesture as if oppressed, and turned her eyes again upon the dreaming sea.

The count straightened himself slowly. His look still dwelt upon her. Suddenly he lifted the golden plait and put it to his lips. "Until to-morrow, then!" he said, and smiling, turned away.

Marjorie started a little at the action, but he gave her no time for protest. He was gone with the stealth of a serpent before she could speak. A slight shiver went through her, that instinctive sense of shrinking which she had felt when she had first met him. She liked him; he fascinated her. But there were moments when his presence filled her with a vague uneasiness. She was conscious of relief when she knew that he had left the house.

But yet she made no move to join her mother. Her heart was very heavy, but yet she felt impelled to hold aloof. Her mother's attitude puzzled and hurt her. And she was angry, too, with Hugo Quentin. She was sure that he had used very strong persuasion to bring about this turn of events. The feeling that she was to be dependent upon him was almost intolerable to her. She resented his interference from the bottom of her soul. She would even have preferred to be dependent upon the count.

But she knew herself to be helpless. Her future had been settled between him and her mother without any reference to herself; and that fact had aroused in her a storm of indignation such as had never before swayed her. She had no choice but to submit, but submission was gall to her. Had she dared, she would have appealed to the count; but he himself had made this course impossible. That silent caress of his had somehow checked the impulse at its beginning. She could not even contemplate it now, though why it should have had that effect upon her she could not have said.

So she waited there alone in bitterness of soul for the wheels of destiny to whirl her away.

When she heard the quiet step at last of the man to whom her mother had entrusted her, she drew back a little, but with no thought of escape. Slight as was her acquaintance with Hugo Quentin, she had come to know him as a man who would sooner or later surmount every obstacle in his path.

She believed he would seek out her mother first, but in this she was mistaken. He had seen her at the window, and he halted at the foot of the steps.

"May I come in this way?" he asked. She moved forward again reluctantly. "Yes, of course," she said.

There was no greeting in her voice; she felt unnaturally cold and stiff. He mounted the steps and entered. His face was grave, but she noted again those faintly humorous lines about his mouth which first had drawn her to him. She resisted the attraction now. She did not want to like him any more.

He looked at her, his grey eyes kind and temperate. "Your mother has told you about our talk this morning?" he asked.

Marjorie nodded. "Yes."

"And you are coming with me?" said Hugo.

Her eyes met his for a second, blue and wrathful. "I must," she said.

"Oh, don't put it like that!" He came close to her. "Marjorie, you're not angry?" he said. "I didn't think you could get angry."

She turned from him. "You don't know me very well yet, do you?" she said.

"Yes, I do," he asserted. "But—really, you know—you're not looking at this from the right point of view. Marjorie, don't turn your back on me! It's rude."

His voice held no more than the mildest protest; but she turned back instantly with a burning face.

"I—I suppose you think I ought to be grateful," she said, tremulously. "But I can't be—and I'm not! There!"

"My child," he said, "I am thankful to hear it, for nothing would embarrass me more. But you needn't want to kick me for the very natural desire to be useful. I don't deserve that. 'Pon my word, I don't."

That moved her, in spite of herself. Her eyes filled with tears. "I don't!" she said. "I don't!"

"Oh, that's right," said Hugo, with evident relief. "I was afraid you did."

He did not see the tears, for the moonlight on the water caught his attention.

"By Jove!" he said. "That is beautiful!

I don't wonder that you don't want to leave. I only wonder at myself for having the cheek to suggest such a thing."

She drew to his side as he stood, looking forth. "Cousin Hugo," she said, "why do you want to take me away from my mother?"

He glanced at her. "I wanted your mother to come too," he said. "But she seems to think this place is better for her."

"Then why should I leave her?" persisted Marjorie. "She is not strong. I ought—surely I ought—to stay and take care of her!"

He turned to her fully, with that slight movement of the eyebrows characteristic of him when facing a difficulty. "Marjorie," he said, "I am going to ask you to do something rather great. It isn't an easy thing, of course. Great things never are. But will you try?"

"What is it?" said Marjorie.

Her agitation had subsided. He seemed to possess a calming influence. But her resentment remained, dully smouldering. She could not be angry with him, since he would not suffer it. But she would not be friendly

"It is this," he said. "Will you try to take me on trust, to believe in me, and not to ask too many questions? I'm not particularly good at explaining things. But I assure you that it is best for you to accept your mother's decision, best for her too. Will you take my word for that?"

Marjorie hesitated.

He held out his hand. "Try!" he urged.

She gave him her own, albeit not very willingly. "I am not quite a child, you know," she said.

"I know," he answered. "You ought to put your hair up, and then I should remember to treat you with proper respect."

She flushed suddenly and inexplicably, remembering the count's leave-taking.

But Hugo passed easily on, quite unconscious of her confusion. "Do you know I think we ought to be going? I have a sort of family-coach waiting in the road. The fellow will come up for your luggage. Where is your mother?"

"I will take you to her," Marjorie said. "And then I had better go and dress."

All desire to weep had left her now. She felt again that sensation of coldness, of numbness, of not caring what happened to her. Nothing seemed real. All the vivid colouring of the morning had died away. Life was grey and empty. Her mother did not want her.

She took Hugo to her door, and went away to make her final preparations. As one in a dream, she got ready for her journey. The future was all blank before her. The past had fallen away. All the old landmarks were gone. She felt dazed, wholly unlike herself.

When she entered her mother's room, it was like entering the presence of a stranger. Hugo rose at her coming, and moved aside. She realized that his intention was to efface himself, and she wondered why. The moments were passing quickly, so quickly; and everything was blurred and indistinct. She would not have noticed him in any case.

There came a few seconds of blinding pain while her mother's arms clasped her—a few seconds of anguished wonder at the unseen and uncomprehended force that was parting them. And during those seconds she clung desperately close, as one seeking refuge.

But it was all over very quickly. She never knew afterwards quite how the parting came. She had a hazy impression of her mother's face, white and exhausted, on the cushion; of old Marie stooping over her; and then of a firm hand that took her own arm and led her steadily away.

When she came out of that dreadful nightmare, all choked and convulsed with tears, she was crouched in the corner of a lumbering vehicle with Hugo by her side.

His hand was clasping hers, but he did not speak at all; and presently he gently took his hand away.

Thereafter the darkness seemed to engulf her, such a darkness as could be felt. And through it the horse's hoofs hammered perpetually, while the wheels of destiny rumbled in their wake.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE FÊTE.

"WHAT a singularly beautiful face!" Mrs. Lingarde, the Bishop's wife, gave her husband a sharp nudge to attract his attention. "No, John, no! You are looking in quite the wrong direction. Follow my eyes! I can't point."

The Bishop obediently turned his mild eyes upon her face; then, with his usual deliberation, adjusted his glasses and looked benevolently forth upon that portion of the gay crowd below them upon which his wife was pointedly gazing.

It was the first of June, a date set apart for the annual garden *fête* at the Palace in aid of the Cathedral upkeep. The Palace gardens were always at their best at that time of the year, and there were no restrictions. All who bought tickets could wander whithersoever they would. On the little island on the lake a string band was playing, and the strains lilted across the water like fairy-music.

The Bishop and his wife received their own particular friends upon the terrace, and from here they looked forth over the shifting crowd that roamed at will about their domain. In the evening there would be fireworks, but during the afternoon the band, the refreshment-tents, the gardens, and the boats that plied about the lake were the only forms of entertainment provided. No one seemed to want anything more; everyone looked happy. It was a glorious day, and all the mothers of Compton Regis had brought their babies to the *fête*. The gardens were full of gossiping groups.

The particular group upon which Mrs. Lingarde's attention was focused stood against a great bank of flowering rhododendrons. It was composed of several children, an old lady in black, nervously upright and alert, and a girl—a girl whose beauty shone like a dazzling flower among lesser flowers. She was stooping over one of the children to fasten a trailing sash-ribbon, and her delicate face was flushed and merry.

"Is she not exquisite?" murmured Mrs. Lingarde. "Who can she be, I wonder?"

"She is with the little Rossiters," observed the Bishop, who knew everyone. "And the old lady is Miss Lacey, who lives at The Grey House with that young fellow who sang the funny songs at the concerts last winter. Dear me! What is his name? I know it as well as my own."

"Do you mean Mr. Quentin?" said Mrs. Lingarde.

"Yes, yes, to be sure—Hugo Quentin. Poor old Miss Lacey lost all her money, and he adopted her, or so the story goes. Can he have adopted this pretty girl too, I wonder?" The Bishop's eyes twinkled. "Or is she a find of my Lady Rossiter's?"

"That," said the Bishop's wife, with decision, "is what I mean to know before I am very much older."

She threw her husband a smile, and passed him to the steps that led down to the garden.

The little party by the rhododendrons had divided before she arrived upon the scene. Two of the children had run round the great bank of purple flowers to hide, and the girl in white, the object of her quest, with two tiny boys in sailor suits clinging to her hands, had started in pursuit.

"She is like a blush rose," murmured the Bishop's wife.

She reached the old lady, who was evidently stationed as a home for the players, and held out a cordial hand.

"Miss Lacey, isn't it? Yes, I thought so. Are you obliged to stand there in the broiling sun? Won't you come into the shade? Or, better still, let me offer you tea on the terrace! It is much cooler there."

Miss Lacey looked greatly surprised. She knew Mrs. Lingarde, of course, but that Mrs. Lingarde should know her was a distinction to which she had never ventured to aspire. She was almost too fluttered to reply.

"How kind of you!" she managed to say at last. "How very kind! But I am here with dear Marjorie and the little Rossiter children. I must not leave them."

"Oh, they must come too," smiled the Bishop's wife, and she waited beside Miss Lacey till, with shrieks and laughter, the children came scampering back.

Marjorie was carrying the smallest boy on her shoulder. Her glowing face was upturned. She did not see Mrs. Lingarde. The child had snatched at a rhododendron-flower in passing, and was showering the petals all about her.

"My dear! How naughty!" protested Miss Lacey, much disturbed. "What will Mrs. Lingarde think?"

"Perhaps she won't know!" laughed Marjorie.

And then very suddenly she realized Mrs. Lingarde's presence, and blushed vividly all over her fair face.

But Mrs. Lingarde came swiftly to the rescue. "My dear child, you are welcome to every flower in the garden," she said. "I have just been asking Miss Lacey to come and have tea on the terrace. Bring the little ones, won't you? I am sure they must all be very hot and thirsty."

Marjorie lowered her burden to the ground. Like Miss Lacey, she was considerably overawed by the unexpected appearance of the Bishop's wife. She glanced at the old lady inquiringly; then, perceiving her to be even more flustered than she was herself, she conquered her own embarrassment and made reply.

"Thank you. We should like to come. I will try to make the little ones behave nicely; but I'm not sure that I can."

She smiled with the words, a sweet and winning smile, and Mrs. Lingarde was enchanted.

"Come along then, all of you!" she said. "I want to introduce you to the Bishop," she added to Marjorie. "But I haven't heard your name yet."

"My name is Quentin," said Marjorie.

"Marjorie Quentin! What a pretty name!" commented Mrs. Lingarde. "I think I must call you Marjorie. May I?"

"Of course," said Marjorie. "I like it best." She drew nearer to the Bishop's wife with the words, for none knew better how to inspire confidence in those she liked.

Mrs. Lingarde slipped a hand through her arm and patted it. "And you have come to live here?" she asked her, kindly.

"For the present," said Marjorie, with slight hesitation.

"How nice, dear child! You must let me see something of you. I know Mr. Hugo Quentin quite well. He is your elder brother?"

"No," Marjorie said, a hint of reserve in her voice. "We are second cousins."

"Oh, really!" Mrs. Lingarde looked momentarily surprised. "And Miss Lacey takes care of you?" she questioned, swiftly recovering. "What a happy party!"

Marjorie smiled with a hint of constraint. Now that her game with the children was over she looked older, and there was less spontaneity about her.

"Cousin Hugo is away all day," she said; "very often at night, too. I don't see a great deal of him."

"Ah! He is a busy man," commented Mrs. Lingarde. "I must ask him to bring you to dine. I will send you a card, Miss Lacey."

"You are very kind—most kind," twittered Miss Lacey. "But I go out so little in the evening. I am afraid of the chill."

"What a deadly existence for a young girl!" was Mrs. Lingarde's inward comment. Aloud she said, briskly, "Ah, well, you and Marjorie must come to luncheon some day. Now, children, mind the steps! There is the Bishop waiting for you. You all know him."

There was a general scamper on the part of the children to reach him, and all further talk became impossible for the time. Marjorie's attention was concentrated upon the care of her little charges, and she had none to spare for anything else.

The Bishop was interested in her, however, and when tea was over he came and sat down by her side.

"MARJORIE ROSE WITH ALACRITY. SHE HAD A FEELING THAT THE BISHOP WAS RELIEVED ALSO BY THE INTERRUPTION."

"I wonder if you are related to Dermot Quentin, the astronomer," he said.

Marjorie looked up quickly. "He was my father. Did you know him?"

"Your father! Was he indeed?" The Bishop looked at her momentarily with an expression she did not understand. Then, "Yes, I knew him well," he said. "He was a wonderful man. His death was a great loss to science."

"I don't remember much about him," Marjorie said, frankly. "I expect he thought more of science than anything else."

There was a touch of compassion about the Bishop's smile. "He certainly gave up a good deal of himself to it," he said.

Marjorie's eyes were upon him with eager interest. "And my mother?" she questioned. "Do you know her?"

The Bishop hesitated for a second. Then, "Yes, I have met her," he said. "But it is years ago now."

"But you couldn't forget her," Marjorie said. "She is so beautiful."

Again the Bishop hesitated. He looked oddly embarrassed, she thought. "I did not know your mother so well," he said, gently, at length.

A curious little sense of chill came upon Marjorie. He did not want to talk about her mother. That was like Hugo, who never voluntarily mentioned her name. She wondered why.

Voltano's words, spoken in anger on that first evening of their meeting, flashed upon her. Her mother had quarrelled with her father's family. There had been an estrangement then. But why had she never been told? Why had Hugo refused so firmly to answer her questions? She felt baffled and hurt. It was not fair of Hugo to keep her in the dark.

The Bishop's wife came and bent over her. "I have just caught sight of your cousin in the garden," she said. "I expect he is looking for you. Shall we go and find him?"

Marjorie rose with alacrity. She had a feeling that the Bishop was relieved also by the interruption. She moved away with Mrs. Lingarde, glad to feel the pressure of the plump hand on her arm.

"I hope you will let me see more of you, dear," her hostess said. "I am a very busy woman, but I mean to have a secretary—one with a pretty, bright face like yours for choice," she smiled upon Marjorie, "and then I shall have more time to spare for my friends."

Marjorie's trouble passed like a cloud. She smiled back, her own, sunny smile. "You would want somebody much cleverer than me," she said.

"Oh, no, dear. I want someone who would be a daughter to me—someone I can spoil," laughed the Bishop's wife, who had never had a child of her own. "Ah! There is your cousin! He is coming our way. What a nice fellow he is! I have always liked him."

"Everyone likes him," said Marjorie, but she did not endorse the general opinion as Mrs. Lingarde somewhat obviously expected.

Hugo reached them, quiet, courteous, serene. He was always cool, it seemed to Marjorie, even in the hottest weather.

"I got back by an earlier train," he explained to Mrs. Lingarde, "so came on here to find Miss Lacey and my cousin."

"And we have already made friends," said Mrs. Lingarde. "Miss Lacey is up on the terrace with the little Rossiters. Now listen to me, Mr. Quentin! Let her take the children home, and you and Marjorie stay to dinner! We shall be quite an informal party, and the fireworks will be well worth seeing, I assure you."

Hugo looked at Marjorie. During the fortnight that had elapsed since their return to England her existence had been a very quiet one. She had settled down with his old friend at The Grey House without any apparent discontent or boredom; but by her very submission he was aware that she was not happy. Her candour, her gaiety, all the effervescence of her youth, seemed to have vanished, giving place to a delicate reserve which he found quite impenetrable. He would have given much to have recalled the child who had first so spontaneously accosted him, but she seemed to be beyond his reach, and it was not in him to seek to tread forbidden ground. He shrank, moreover, from reopening a subject upon which he was powerless to speak openly. He had been trusting to time to restore her natural lightness of heart, and Mrs. Lingarde's invitation would have been a very welcome one, but he was not quite certain of Marjorie. He looked to her to read her inclination.

She met his eyes at once, but with that aloof expression with which she always regarded him now, and she said nothing whatever.

"Thank you very much," Hugo said, turning to Mrs. Lingarde. "It rests with Marjorie."

"Wouldn't you like to stay, dear child?" questioned her new friend. "We sha'n't have anyone alarming, I assure you."

Marjorie's smile shone out again. It was only to Hugo, it seemed, that her soul was barred. "Yes, thank you, I should like to stay," she said. "That is, if Miss Lacey really doesn't mind."

"Miss Lacey minds nothing that doesn't entail being late to bed," observed Hugo. "We mustn't ask her to sit up for us, that's all."

They went back to the terrace, and the rest of the afternoon slipped pleasantly away. Marjorie blossomed like a flower in the sunshine. She was more like her merry self than she had been since leaving Belleroche. It was as if the cloud that had overhung her ever since had suddenly lifted. She forgot to be shy or constrained.

They watched the fireworks from the terrace after dark had fallen. It was a beautiful night, still and starry. The garden below was full of a thousand scents. The lake blazed like a jewel in the many flashing lights. Marjorie was deeply fascinated, eager as a child.

When it was over at last, she turned to Mrs. Lingarde with a great sigh. "Oh, I have enjoyed it so! I wish it wasn't ended. Why do nice things last such a very short time, I wonder?"

The Bishop's wife smiled and kissed her. "I hope there are a great many nice things in store for you, my child," she said.

Marjorie sighed again, rather wistfully. "One never knows till they're over how they are going to end," she said.

CHAPTER II.

THE ONLY WAY.

WALKING home again with Hugo through the soft dusk of the summer night the shadow descended again. Marjorie grew quieter and quieter till at length she dropped into almost complete silence.

Hugo talked on in his kindly, casual way. No doubt she was tired.

They reached The Grey House, standing in its dainty, well-ordered garden. The air was full of the scent of roses. They twined over the old porch, filling it with their sweetness.

Hugo paused here to unlock the door; Marjorie stood outside with her face to the stars. He opened the door, then turned and quietly joined her. They stood in utter silence side by side.

Marjorie moved at length with a slightly embarrassed gesture. She was not accustomed to silence from Hugo. He spoke at once. "It seems a shame to turn in on a night like this."

She turned her face resolutely inwards. "But it's getting very late," she said. "It must be."

He followed her in, pausing to bolt the door. She waited for him in the old square hall.

As he came forward at length, she spoke rather hurriedly. "Cousin Hugo, I want to say something to you. May I say it now?"

"Of course," said Hugo.

She stood hesitating under the dimly-burning lamp. Her face was pale, and there was unmistakable distress in her blue eyes.

"What is it?" said Hugo, kindly. "Don't be agitated!"

"It—is rather a difficult thing to say," she said.

"Come into the dining-room!" he suggested.

He opened the door with the words, and half-mechanically she entered. There was a tray of refreshments on the table. He went to it, poured out a glass of milk, and offered it to her.

She took it from him, but she did not drink. He turned aside, adjusted the lamp, and picked up a letter that lay on the table.

Then, as she still did not speak, he opened and began to read it.

Several minutes passed away.

Marjorie stood with the glass of milk in her hand, waiting.

He looked up at length, folded the letter, and

laid it aside. "Please excuse me! You were going to say something. What was it?" he said.

She glanced at him rather piteously. "You won't be vexed?" she said.

He smiled at the question. "You are not afraid of me, surely! No one ever was before."

"No—no. Not afraid. Only—only—I don't want to—to make you think me horrid," she said, on the verge of tears.

"I shall always think of you as the nicest little girl in the world," said Hugo, in his matter-of-fact way. "I can't say more than that, can I?"

She shook her head. "Please don't laugh! It's—it's serious."

"I am serious," declared Hugo, and came to her with the words. He laid a very gentle hand on her shoulder. "What is the trouble, Marjorie? Tell me!"

She looked at him piteously, as if she found his kindness very hard to bear. Then, with an effort, "Cousin Hugo," she said, "I—want to go back to my mother."

"I—see." Hugo spoke slowly. He was bending slightly towards her, for the light was dim. "You can't be happy away from her? Is that it?"

She nodded. "You are so kind," she whispered. "I feel—such a pig—to ask you. But—oh, Hugo—I feel as if—as if—there were a great cloud—hanging between us. What is it? What is it? Why was I taken away from her? I want her so! I want her!" She broke down, hiding her face.

He put his arm round her, so that she leaned against him. "Oh, Marjorie, my dear, don't cry—don't cry!" he said.

"I can't help it!" sobbed Marjorie, and suddenly turned and clung to him, with quivering, beseeching face upraised. "Oh, Hugo, do take me back to her! Do! Do!" she begged him, brokenly.

His arm tightened about her for a moment, and then very swiftly relaxed again. He stiffened himself, and she saw his mouth harden. "Marjorie, I can't," he said.

But she clung to him still with passionate entreaty. "Don't refuse! It's breaking my heart. Of course, I know you have a reason. But no reason on earth can be big enough to keep me away from my own mother. Oh, Hugo, I thought at first that she wanted to get rid of me, but I know now how ridiculous, how absurd, it was to think such a thing. It was all for my sake—because you had offered to take me. And it was so awfully kind of you, dear Hugo. I know that. I'm not ungrateful. But it hurt me so to be sent away like that, and I was horrid to her—I was horrid. I want to go back—if it's only to kiss her just once more. Oh, don't look like that—so hard, so grim! You're not like that, really. It isn't your nature." She stopped, panting, terribly agitated, her sweet face strained and anguished, her eyes imploring him.

He put up a restraining hand, and laid it on her head, drawing it to rest once more against his shoulder. "What do you know about my nature, Marjorie?" he said.

She quivered at the question, but she answered it through choking tears. "I know that you are kind—your heart is kind. It isn't in you to be cruel. If—if you knew how dreadfully—how dreadfully—I want this thing—you couldn't—you couldn't refuse—for any reason."

"Could I not?" Hugo said. But his hand remained upon the golden head, stroking, soothing. "Wouldn't you sooner hurt someone you loved than give them something which you knew would be bad for them?" he asked.

She caught at his hand, drew it down, and passionately kissed it. "Hugo—Hugo—let me go to her!" she prayed. "I don't care a rap if it's bad for me or not. Only—only—let me go!"

He made a sharp movement as if to withdraw his hand, but instantly checked himself. "You're pressing me—horribly hard," he said, in a low voice.

She kissed the hand again, piteously, imploringly. It was all wet with her tears. "Oh, don't refuse! You can't! You can't!" she whispered.

He stood in silence, suffering her.

"It means—everything—to me," she went on. "I can't tell you what it means. Hugo, why are you so hard to move? It isn't like you. It isn't—you!"

But still he stood in silence, neither yielding nor resisting. It was almost as if he waited for a sign.

She was holding his hand against her face, and she felt his fingers close, pressing her cheek, but very slowly, as if to give her time to free herself if she desired. But she only buried her face a little deeper into his breast.

"I don't care what it costs," she sobbed. "I'll make any sacrifice—do anything you ask—if you will only—only grant me this one thing. Oh, Hugo, you can do it! Won't you—won't you?"

He moved at last, moved as if the sign had come, and with quiet decision he turned her face upwards and held it so. "Marjorie," he said, "I am going to say something that will amaze you; but you needn't be afraid. There's nothing in it to frighten you. I can do it—as you say. I can do it." He paused, looking straight down into her swimming eyes. "But only on one condition."

He took out his handkerchief and gently wiped away the tears.

She caught his hands in hers. "I will do it, dear Hugo. I will do it!" she said, eagerly.

"Ah! Wait a minute! That is just the danger with you," he said, his mouth faintly quizzical. "You don't stop to think. The condition is a pretty big one. It is just this. If I take you back to your mother, I must have the right and the power to protect you. My present position is an anomalous one. Nominally, I am your guardian; actually, I am nothing more than a distant relation. If I take you back, I must have full powers. You must give me those powers."

Her hands were still clasped upon his. She met his look with absolute confidence. "I will

do anything, dear Hugo—anything!" she said, very earnestly.

"Will you?" he said. "I wonder. You don't know what it entails yet, and, on my soul, I don't know quite how to break it to you."

She smiled a quivering, rainbow smile. "I sha'n't mind anything," she declared. "Tell me just what I'm to do—and I'll do it. I promise I'll do it."

His face changed a little as he looked at her. The quizzical lines vanished, leaving it unwontedly sad. "Oh, child!" he said. "I feel as if I'm taking a mean advantage, but it's the only way. If you can't be happy unless I take you back to your mother, you must put yourself entirely in my hands before we go. In other words—you must marry me. Now—what will you say?"

She started a little, indeed, but it was with no backward movement, no suggestion of shrinking. "Marry you, Hugo!" she said, her delicate brows drawn together. "But—but—what a funny idea!"

Hugo's faint smile reappeared. "Yes, isn't it? Monstrous funny! Can you bring yourself to do it? That's the question."

She looked at him for a moment with puzzled eyes; then very oddly she too began to smile. "But I said I would do—anything," she said.

"That's the point," said Hugo. "Are you sure this wouldn't be too hard a thing? It means giving yourself to me for good, you know. There'll be no getting out of it again, once it's done."

Her smile deepened, and with it a beautiful flush came up over her pale face, blotting out all her distress. "Dear Hugo, as if I'd mind—that!" she said, and, bending again very sweetly, she kissed the hands she held.

They turned and clasped her own. He stooped over her. "Marjorie!" he said, in a whisper.

She looked up swiftly, and in a second her arms were around his neck. "Oh, Hugo, darling, thank you—thank you!" she said, and like a child she lifted her lips to his. "You are good to me—much too good!"

He held her closely, but he kissed her only once. "I swear I always will be," he said, under his breath.

CHAPTER III.

DESOLATION.

WHEN Marjorie left The Grey House with Miss Lacey to travel up to town three days later, her thoughts were all with the mother to whom she was returning. Of the event that loomed between her and that joyful return she thought scarcely at all. She was in a fever of anticipation, longing to reach the journey's end, and the means by which she was to accomplish that journey and attain her heart's desire hardly entered into her calculations.

Hugo had gone up to town on the day following the garden *fête* at the Palace, and had remained there, leaving instructions with Miss Lacey to bring his young bride-elect to join him within three days.

He met them at the terminus, looking so exactly as usual that Marjorie could not feel that anything extraordinary was about to happen. In his calm, concise fashion he told them of the arrangements he had made. The marriage would take place at a City church in the afternoon, and he and Marjorie would leave at once to catch the night-boat to Calais. Miss Lacey, to her openly-expressed satisfaction, would be back at The Grey House before sunset. Like Marjorie, she looked to the ultimate rather than to intermediate happenings, and, though surprised by the turn of events, she was not disconcerted. Hugo had done sudden things before; but he was a dear, conscientious fellow, and her faith in him was unbounded. She was fond of Marjorie too, and, though somewhat precipitate, the arrangement met with her full approval. She looked forward to returning to Compton Regis and being the first to impart the news. Everyone would be coming to her for details; for was it not actually falling to her to give away the bride?

Hugo took them to a private hotel, and left them there. "We shall meet at the church," he said, at parting. "Three o'clock! Don't forget!"

He looked at Marjorie, who sprang up and went along the corridor with him, hugging his arm. "It feels just like a play!" she said.

He pinched her flushed cheek. "It won't feel like that always," he said. "Good-bye!"

She lifted her face for his kiss with the utmost simplicity. "I'm not minding it a bit," she said, naively. "I should, you know, if it were anyone but you."

"That's a compliment, is it?" questioned Hugo. "Thank you."

When she had watched him go she went back to coach herself afresh in the wedding service.

"Ah, there now!" said Miss Lacey. "If I haven't forgotten to give him his letters! Is it too late to run after him?"

It was too late; but Marjorie took charge of the letters. She would give them to him after the service.

So for the next hour she busied herself, quieting an occasional cold qualm of nervousness with the thought that she was on her way to her mother. To be married to Hugo was but a detail in comparison with that. Besides, he was such an entirely safe person. She had seen him look grim more than once, but never once had she seen him lose his temper.

"He just couldn't," she decided, as she pored over her Prayer Book. "I needn't in the least mind promising to obey him."

She had never given any very serious thought to marriage. She had always supposed that she would marry some day, but she had lived too much in the present to spend much thought upon her future. Of the world and men she knew nothing. As she had told Hugo at the beginning of their acquaintance, the whole of her knowledge had been gathered from books, and those books had been only such as a very prim schoolmistress had permitted her to read. She was utterly untrained in the ways of the world. All things pertaining to life itself had been most

sedulously kept from her. Her innocence was of the quality of an unopened flower. She knew nothing, and only vaguely realized that there was anything to know.

The thought of being Hugo's wife did not seem to her one of paramount importance. Now that he had given way to her, she decided that she would much rather marry him than anyone else. He was so kind.

And so, when the time came at last, she rose and made ready with a feeling of adventure that drove away misgiving. It certainly felt like a play.

They drove through the crowded summer streets to the door of the City church. It was cool and dark inside, a single bar of misty sunshine piercing the gloom. They were early, but Hugo was there before them. He came down the long aisle and met them by the door.

The faint smile that Marjorie had grown to associate with him was about his lips, as he took her hand into his own. "Nervous?" he asked her.

She shook her head. "Not really. There's nothing to be frightened at, is there?"

"Nothing, I should say," said Hugo. "Come and sit up in the top pew! We are a little before time."

He led her thither, Miss Lacey walking somewhat primly on her other side. Hugo's presence drove the last shadow of misgiving from Marjorie's mind. It suddenly became the most natural thing in the world to be in that dim old church with him beside her. She squeezed his hand and smiled at him.

They reached the top of the church, and sat down close to the chancel-steps. The quiet of the place lay like a benediction all about them. Miss Lacey knelt to pray, but Marjorie sat with her hand still in Hugo's, wondering a little at the strange gladness that filled her heart.

Miss Lacey's prayer came to an end, and she seated herself and turned to the girl. "My dear, hadn't you better give your cousin his letters? I'm sure you'll forget," she whispered.

"Oh, of course." Marjorie pulled them out of her bag. "Here they are, Cousin Hugo! Why, one"—she glanced at it as she passed it—"one has a French stamp! But I don't know the writing."

"HE HESITATED MOMENTARILY, BUT IN THE END HE COMPLIED. SHE WATCHED HIS FACE AS HE READ."

"I'll look at them presently," said Hugo.

But she leaned towards him eagerly. "Please open the French one now! I want to know what's in it."

He hesitated momentarily; but in the end he complied. She watched his face as he read.

It told her nothing whatever. His eyes travelled down the page, paused for a few seconds, and then looked up to hers.

"What is it?" she breathed.

He faced her steadily for a moment or two, then quietly folded the letter and put it away. "I will tell you about it presently," he said. "Time's up." He rose with the words; but she put out a quick hand, detaining him. "Tell me, anyway, if all is well!" she urged, with sudden misgiving.

"All is well," he made quiet answer, and gently drew her to her feet.

She moved to the chancel-steps as one in a

dream. She was not thinking of Hugo at all just then, but of the mother to whom he had promised to take her. She had not had a letter for several days, and if the prospect of so soon seeing her had not diverted her thoughts she would have been anxious. Not that it had even occurred to her that her mother could be really ill. She knew nothing of illness, and since she had not kept her bed it did not seem to her that there could be anything serious the matter.

But for those few moments she had been anxious. She had felt as if a cold hand had touched her, and she longed to get through the service quickly, so that she could hear what that letter in an unknown hand contained. She reassured herself with the reflection that he would not have said that all was well had there been anything wrong, but her impatience remained, and she could scarcely hide it. After all, her mother came first; it was not as if she were marrying for love.

She got through her part with a readiness that astonished, even slightly scandalized, Miss Lacey, who had expected that so young a bride would have needed her support. She was relieved on the whole, however, for she herself had been anxious about the homeward train, and Marjorie's alacrity made her hope that she might even have the good fortune to catch an earlier one.

They had arranged to separate at the church-door, since Hugo and Marjorie were going direct to Charing Cross, and Miss Lacey determined to make good her escape as soon as she had signed the register. She breathed a sigh of relief when the service was over, and hurried after them into the vestry to announce her intention.

"You won't need me any more now, my dear," she said, as she kissed Marjorie's flushed face. "I wish you both every blessing. And now if you will kindly excuse me I think I might catch the four o'clock train down."

"Perhaps you would like to sign first," suggested Hugo.

She thanked him for his consideration, it was so like him to think of it, and hastened to accept the offer.

"After all, I taught him his nice manners," she reflected, as she hastened away; "so I think I am entitled to profit by them now and then."

She had been his mother's governess, and had taught him his earliest lessons.

Marjorie watched her departure with a dimpling face. "Funny old dear!" she murmured. "She did so hate coming up to town. It was very good of her to do it."

She signed her name in a sprawling, girlish hand, and then nudged Hugo to make him come away, for the clergyman who had married them was of a somewhat garrulous turn. "I'm getting anxious about our train now," she explained. "It would be so dreadful to miss the boat."

Hugo was considerate once more. He disengaged himself as soon as possible, and they passed down the church together, and out into the crowded street once more.

A car awaited them, and he put her into it, then, with a word to the chauffeur, followed her. They whizzed away into a dense thoroughfare.

Eagerly Marjorie turned to the man at her side. "Now tell me!" she said. "That letter—I do so want to know what was in it."

He took the hand she laid on his arm. "Wait a little," he said.

With difficulty she controlled her impatience, for something in his manner seemed to insist upon her doing so. She tried to amuse herself with the varied crowd through which they were passing, but all the while her heart was clamouring within her, and she felt on edge with suspense.

Hugo did not speak again. He sat, still with his hand on hers, gazing straight before him. Inwardly she chafed at his stillness, but she knew it was useless to urge him. There was nothing for it but to wait.

The car turned suddenly up a quiet side-street and stopped at the corner of a square. Hugo leaned forward and opened the door. Marjorie stared in amazement.

"Why—why, this is the hotel where we lunched! I thought we were to go straight to Charing Cross!"

"Come in here first!" he said.

Again something in his manner stilled protest. She went with him in quivering silence.

He took her to the private room that he had engaged earlier in the day, shut the door upon them, and took both her hands very tenderly, very sustainingly, into his.

"Marjorie, my dear," he said, "you asked me a little while ago, when I read that letter, if all was well. All is well, my child, but—your mother will not need you now. She is—at rest."

"Hugo!" She stared at him, wide-eyed, uncomprehending. "What—what do you mean?"

His hold tightened upon her, drawing her close. "She died three days ago," he said, simply.

She stared at him still, half-stupefied by the suddenness of the blow.

He bent to her. "Marjorie, you have given me the right to take care of you. Remember, you are not alone."

He would have drawn her into his arms, but very swiftly she resisted him. "Please—please, Hugo! I want to know everything. You say—you say—my mother is dead. I suppose it's true, but somehow I can't believe it. Will you show me the letter?"

He took it from his pocket. "It is written by a stranger—a doctor. It gives no more than the bare fact. She died on the first of June—three days ago—in the evening. The trouble was heart-disease."

"That—that was the night I begged you to take me to her," Marjorie said, speaking slowly, as one dazed. "I—I felt then as if—as if she were calling me. Hugo—Hugo, why did I leave her?"

He did not answer her. Though she had resisted, almost repulsed, him, he had kept one hand in his—the hand that wore his ring. He was ready, he was waiting, to comfort her. But she did not seem to want comfort. She was looking at him strangely, almost as though she did not wholly trust him. "Why didn't you tell me of this before?" she asked him.

Her voice was very low. It almost seemed to quiver on the edge of an accusation. He met her look with his usual quiet assurance. "It was not the time," he said. "I couldn't tell you then."

She made a little gesture of non-comprehension. "You—I suppose you thought it would have stopped the service—upset your plans?"

"Partly that," he said.

"And if it had," said Marjorie, "what would it have mattered? I—I didn't specially want to marry you."

"I know," Hugo said.

He seemed on the verge of saying more, but changed his mind, and closed his lips instead.

Marjorie looked downwards at the hand he still held. "I can't understand," she said. "That was all we were getting married for, so that we could go back to my mother together, and you could take care of me. Wasn't that the reason?"

"Perhaps not the only reason," Hugo said, gently. "I wanted the right to take care of you, you know. I want it still."

"I can't see that it matters now," Marjorie said.

She freed her hand and sat down. She seemed to have lost all her vitality. The very vividness of her beauty seemed to have faded. And over her like a veil descended that strange reserve which had overhung her during those few weeks at The Grey House. She looked almost too tired to feel.

Hugo sat on the edge of the table close to her. Marjorie in this mood was so utterly different from the Marjorie who had clung to him with such an abandonment of pleading a few nights before that he seemed afraid of intruding upon her. He could not offer comfort when she apparently did not need it. He could only let her feel he was at hand.

She took no notice of him for many seconds. She was as one lost in thought. Her head was bent, her brows drawn.

At last, with a deep sigh, she looked up. "What are we going to do now?" she asked.

He met her eyes very gravely and kindly. "I will do—whatever you wish," he said.

"I don't see that it matters," she said again.

He put his hand on her shoulder. "Marjorie, let me take you back to The Grey House and try to make you happy there!"

She made a sharp movement; it was almost a shudder. "No, not there! I couldn't!"

She was silent again, and Hugo waited also, watching her.

She spoke at length, still with her brows drawn in that painful, puzzled fashion. "I don't think you ought to have married me. It doesn't seem right, somehow. It's done now, I know. I suppose it couldn't be undone?"

His own brows went up a little, but his mouth was momentarily quizzical as he said, "Don't you think you might give me a trial before we talk of that?"

She did not answer. Only after a second or two she stood up with a restless movement and faced him. "I know you mean to be kind," she said. "I'm not ungrateful. I can't think properly yet. I can't realize. I only know that I can't go back with you, and—and play at being married. I've got to—to—somehow to find myself—to get hold of life. My mother, I know, had no money, and, of course, I have none either. But I can't be dependent upon you—as I have been. I—must make my own living."

He held out his hand to her. "It isn't unusual you know," he said, "for a wife to be entirely dependent upon her husband."

She drew back a little, an odd, half-frightened look in her eyes. "Oh, I know," she said. "Not for real wives and real husbands. But I am different. I——"

He interrupted her very quietly. "You are not really different, my dear. You belong to me every whit as much as Mrs. Lingarde belongs to the Bishop. We are not playing at being married, we are dealing with actual fact. You are sworn to me; and an oath is an oath."

"Hugo!" Actual fear gleamed in her blue eyes. She started back still further, looking at him like a frightened fawn.

His hand was still extended, but she would not touch it. He dropped it at last. "I don't know why you should be afraid of me," he said, in the same calm, restrained voice. "I have never given you any reason to be. I am not going to insist on my rights, but I can't have them ignored entirely. You must learn to regard yourself as my wife. But in Heaven's name, child, don't make a bugbear of me! I'm ready to do anything under the sun to make you happy."

"Happy!" whispered Marjorie.

He stood up. "Yes, happy," he repeated. "I could make you happy if you would let me. If you won't—well, it isn't my way to force myself on anyone. Only I must look after you to a certain extent. I'm not going to let you make a mess of things if I can help it."

Marjorie was very pale, but she still faced him, albeit rather desperately. "You won't try to make me live with you at The Grey House?" she said.

He shook his head. "I'm not going to make you do anything, Marjorie, unless"—he hesitated momentarily—"well, unless I am compelled myself. Tell me now what it is you want to do!"

His tone was absolutely kind, but she still hung back from him, not wholly trusting him. "I can't tell you yet, Hugo. I've got to think. Please let me think! I'll tell you to-morrow."

"And to-night?" he questioned.

She glanced round. "Can't we stay here?"

"If you wish," said Hugo.

"Then let us do that," she said. "And—and you mustn't mind if I want to be quite alone. You won't mind, will you?"

"Poor child!" he said, softly. "I'll go. But do you know you would send me away much happier if you would kiss me first?"

She drew a quick breath. "No, Hugo! Please not! I'm not a child any longer now. And there are so many things I've got to get used to. Don't be vexed with me, will you?

I don't want to vex you. Only—only——" her lips suddenly quivered, and she turned away.

Hugo turned in the same moment, but in the opposite direction. "All right, dear," he said. "Have it your own way! Only don't forget that I'm here if wanted."

He went to the door with the words, paused a second, then passed out.

Marjorie stood tensely listening till she was sure that he had gone, then flung herself face downwards on the sofa in a passion of tears. All her world had crumbled to ashes around her, and she was alone in the midst of the desolation. If only she had not married him, how thankful she would have been for the comfort of his presence! But now everything was changed; she knew not wherefore. Only the very fact that she had given herself to him seemed to estrange her the more hopelessly. Her mother was gone. The sole reason for her action had ceased to be. And she was frightened—frightened as she had never been in all her life before. Somehow in one brief half-hour of bewildering, blinding grief he had ceased to be her friend and protector, and had become her captor. She had believed that his reason for desiring the marriage had been identical with her own. She knew now that this was not so. If he had only told her first! If he had only told her first! If he had only given her the opportunity to draw back at the last moment!

She did not believe that she would have taken it, but the fact that he had not given her the chance had, at least temporarily, destroyed her confidence in him.

She could not accept his comfort. She went down into the depths of suffering alone.

CHAPTER IV.

A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE.

"HUGO QUENTIN may be—in fact, I believe he is—a very nice young man," pronounced the Bishop's wife. "But in marrying that little cousin of his at a moment's notice he made the biggest mistake of his life. Of course, you're a man, John. You won't understand. But you may take my word for it, so it is."

The Bishop's eyes twinkled behind their glasses. He was always indulgent when his wife spoke her mind. "You are a very able woman, my dear," he observed. "Perhaps you will be able to rectify it."

"I shall do my best," she returned with determination, "but I am by no means sure that I shall succeed. The poor child is quite broken-hearted over her loss, but her one idea seems to be to avoid all reference to it, and to her husband. I can't understand it. I really can't. I feel as if for some reason she is afraid of him. And yet I can't believe that he would be other than kind to her—especially at such a time."

"I am sure he would not," the Bishop said, with quiet decision. "I presume he married her so as to be in a position to take care of her at her mother's death."

"That was the idea, no doubt; but there is something more behind." His wife spoke uneasily. "I would give a good deal to know if Hugo is really in love with her. It would simplify matters so very much if he were. And yet the only time she spoke of her marriage, and that was when I almost forced her to do so, she assured me that it had been purely one of convenience. I was a little shocked to hear her put it in that way, and I am afraid she saw it. Anyway, she has not mentioned it since, and I feel very worried."

"Try a little patience, my dear!" suggested the Bishop.

"That's all very well, John; but it seems to me that the matter is too urgent for that. An estrangement may be checked in its beginning, but it becomes a habit so tragically soon, if left alone. I am afraid that too much patience will be Hugo's undoing. He ought to have insisted upon taking her back with him to The Grey House, or, better still, have taken her away for a little to recover from the shock. Alone with him, she would soon have turned to him for comfort. She is such a sweet girl, so lovable and eager to please. He must be in love with her, John! He wouldn't be human if he weren't! And yet, why, oh, why, did he let her come to me to be my paid secretary when she might have been, she ought to have been, enjoying her honeymoon and forgetting all her troubles with him?"

"Perhaps he thought your influence would be better for her," said the Bishop. "Evidently the honeymoon idea did not attract her very strongly. She is but a child, you know. She has got to grow up. I think myself that he was very wise not to insist too much upon his rights. He will come after her presently, when she has got over the worst of her trouble. Poor child! She feels it badly enough no doubt, but it is hardly natural that it should last very long. She never lived with her mother."

"No. Yet she seems to have worshipped her," mused Mrs. Lingarde. "She must have been a wonderful woman."

"She was," the Bishop said. "Her beauty was amazing. I saw her the year before she left poor Dermot. She was altogether too brilliant for him, clever in his own line though he undoubtedly was. I never saw a sharper contrast. And yet he loved her, loved her so much that he never divorced her, swore that he would take her back if only she would go. She never did. Of course, he didn't live very long after." The Bishop sighed.

"A case in point!" declared his wife. "He was too patient. He should have gone after her and fetched her back by main force if he wanted her. She would have respected him then, probably have learnt to love him. I suppose Marjorie knows nothing of all this?"

"Probably not. I imagine it was in part to shield her, if ever the knowledge reached her, that Hugo married her."

"But he must be in love with her. He must! He must! I hope he isn't going to be as silly as poor Dermot appears to have been."

"Is she in love with him? That's the question," said the Bishop.

"My dear John, she is scarcely old enough to

know the meaning of the word. But I have no doubt he could make her love him if he tried. And really he ought not to be too patient at this stage. Everyone in Compton Regis knows by this time that they are married, and living apart."

"I should imagine that Hugo is the sort of young man who wouldn't care a brass farthing what anyone said about him," remarked the Bishop.

"Yes; but he should think of her. He ought to think of her. It isn't fair that that lovely girl should be the subject of unkind gossip, and I am quite powerless to protect her from it. No, there is no doubt about it. He ought to insist upon her going to him. For her own sake he ought to do so. I wish you would tackle him upon the matter, John, and tell him just what you think."

"Or what you think, my dear," questioned the Bishop, mildly humorous. "No, I am inclined to think that Hugo is right to be patient; that is, if the marriage was really that abominable arrangement called a marriage of convenience. Even if he is in love with her, it will do no harm to wait till her grief for her mother has subsided a little. Of course, she is miserable now, poor girl. She is bound to be for a while. But it will pass, you know; it will pass. She will begin to look around her for distractions presently, and then it will be Hugo's turn. He probably realizes that. And I think he showed wonderfully good sense in placing her in your charge."

"She wanted to earn her own living; so she told me." Mrs. Lingarde sounded a little dubious. "I didn't feel as if I ought to encourage her. But how could I refuse? Oh, dear me, John! There goes that sculptor-man again, on his way to the Cathedral! I do hope he won't complicate matters by falling in love with her. What should I do if he did?"

"Send for her husband," said the Bishop, sensibly. "But I don't think that is very likely to happen. He is much too engrossed in his study of the carvings. Besides, he is not even our guest."

"No. I wish Lady Rossiter were not so great at encouraging these freaks. She knows nothing whatever about him, because I asked her. And he is quite disturbingly handsome—Italian, she says. A man has only to call himself some sort of artist to be received with open arms by the Rossiters. I call it vulgar myself—such obvious lion-hunting. Well, I only hope Marjorie won't meet him, though I am afraid she will. She wanders about the Cathedral and cloisters a good deal when I am not wanting her. And he is just the sort of romantic person to attract a young girl's fancy."

"You seem to be determined to anticipate troubles," said the Bishop. "I really do not think Marjorie is at all likely to fall in love at first sight with anyone."

"You don't know Marjorie!" declared Mrs. Lingarde. "I am not at all sure that she knows herself yet. She is capable of very deep feeling. When she does fall in love, she will give her whole heart. That is why I am anxious—so very, very anxious—that Hugo should not be too patient. He ought to be up and doing if he means to win her. He ought not to hold aloof in this way."

"He probably knows his own business best," maintained the Bishop.

"He doesn't. Men never do. In any case, I am going to ask him to dine, and I hope—I do hope—that when he comes I shall be able to get him to see reason."

"And I am sure—if good intentions count at all—you ought to succeed nobly," said her husband, with his funny little smile.

But Mrs. Lingarde remained serious. "I have never," she said, "seen anything sadder than my little Marjorie's face. I must see her happy. I must. I must."

"If I know Hugo Quentin, I think you need not be anxious," the Bishop answered, with conviction.

CHAPTER V.

THE WEB OF EVIL.

IT was a late afternoon in the very heart of the summer. The evening service was over, and the Cathedral was empty again. Great bars of misty light lay across its pillars and arches, touched here and there with purple or with rose. Across the altar-steps was flung a great splash of crimson that merged by imperceptible shades of splendid colour into purest gold. It was like the glow of a wonderful dawn.

The Italian sculptor revelled in that flood of burning light. Entering the Cathedral from the western end, it caught and held his eyes as by some irresistible magic. He turned from the cold marble to feast upon it.

He was a man of slight build, dark and handsome, with a short, upturned moustache that gave his features an arrogant expression. His chin was clean-shaven and aggressive, the lower lip full, yet possessing a suggestion of cruelty. His eyes had a remarkable brightness, black eyes and merciless, that glanced from point to point unblinking. They did not look as if they ever slept.

He moved soundlessly up the great aisle till he reached the chancel-gates, and there he stopped, for the gates were closed, and stood gazing, gazing through upon that marvellous wealth of colour.

There came a slight sound in the Cathedral stillness, and swift as an adder he turned. There was something snake-like about his whole personality, a sinuous, stealthy quality, as though he were ever upon his guard, yet ever waiting to strike.

But in a second his gleaming eyes softened, for they lighted upon the figure of a girl. She had entered by a small side-door that led out of the cloisters, and she moved forward without seeing him. She was dressed in black, her fair face and golden hair shining out of the sombre garb with a purity almost sublime. She walked like a nun, with bent head and slow steps, almost as though she feared to intrude in that holy place.

The man at the chancel-gates drew back as

she approached. His eyes, watchful and alert, marked her every movement.

She came close to him still without seeing him, and suddenly her eyes also were caught by the splendour of the holy place. She lifted her face with a sharp, incredulous gasp, and in a moment she was lost in contemplation of the glory. It was a very sad face, but its beauty was as the beauty of a perfect flower. The man's eyes kindled as they dwelt upon it.

The intensity of his gaze must have made itself felt at last, for suddenly, after the passage of several seconds, she turned her head and saw him.

A burning wave of colour overspread her face, and she turned to go. But in that moment he moved also, swift and subtle, reaching her ere she had gone a couple of paces.

"Do you not know me?" he whispered, softly.

She looked at him quickly. Her face changed. "You!" she said.

He took the hand she gave him, and closely held it. "*Bueno!* You have not forgotten me!" he said.

Her lips quivered. She glanced round, as though in search of some private recess where they could be alone.

"'DO YOU NOT KNOW ME?' HE WHISPERED, SOFTLY. SHE LOOKED AT HIM QUICKLY. HER FACE CHANGED. 'YOU!' SHE SAID."

He smiled. "There is a corner behind the organ. We will go there. They do not close for half an hour yet."

His hand drew her irresistibly; she went with him unquestioning.

The recess behind the organ was curtained away from the rest of the building, and lighted only by a small, stained-glass window set deep in the stone. It threw a rose-coloured twilight upon them, and the silence was intense.

Marjorie was the first to speak, still with bated

breath. "I did not know you at first. Why—why are you here?"

"I have come to see you," he made answer, looking at her with those fiery, all-absorbing eyes of his. "I had a notion that you would be pleased to see me. Was I mistaken?"

Her hand still lay in his. She left it there with the confidence of a child. "Of course, I am pleased," she said. "How kind of you to come!"

"Signor Hugo Quentin will not think so," he observed, with a gleam of his teeth.

Again her fair face flushed. She did not question the statement. "I am not surprised that I did not know you," she said. "You look quite different."

He smiled at her words. The absence of the imperial altered his face considerably. He looked many years younger. "I hope I am not less pleasing in your sight," he said.

She smiled also, a fleeting smile that served but to emphasize the sadness of her face. "No; I think it is a great improvement. And I am very pleased to see you. I have often wanted to explain why—how it was—that I left you in the lurch that night."

He made her a ceremonious bow. "No explanation is needed," he declared. "You are the mistress of your own actions, and none possesses the right to question them."

Marjorie looked dubious, but she passed the matter by. It was nearly three months since she had seen him. He had probably almost forgotten the episode. But it was evident that he had not forgotten her. His presence testified to that.

"Have you come to tell me about my mother?" she questioned, with a beating heart. "I have so longed to hear."

"I have come to tell you—many things," he made enigmatic answer. "But first let me ask you, why did you marry Hugo Quentin?"

Her eyes fell before the piercing brightness of his. "I couldn't help it. I wanted—so terribly—to get back to Belleroche—to my mother."

"And he made that a condition?" The question seemed to pierce her also; it was so direct, so unerring.

She bent her head. "Yes. He insisted."

"Against your will?"

There was compulsion in the Italian's voice. The gleam of his eyes was that of the hunter on the track of his prey. Marjorie answered as one who had no choice. "I had no particular wish to marry him, but I would have done anything to get back to my mother."

"Ah! And do you know why he took you away? Have you guessed yet?" There was a hiss in the words; they came from between clenched teeth.

Marjorie looked up, meeting the full force of his gaze with a quiver that seemed to run through every nerve like an electric current. "I know nothing," she said.

"Nothing!" he echoed. "Then I will tell you. Hugo Quentin is a thief, a scoundrel! He is also a murderer! He forced your mother to give you up. He broke her heart. He knew that she was ill, dying. And he took you away when she needed you most. Why, you ask? Because he knew that your mother had quarrelled with his family and desired to punish her. Also because you are beautiful—you are beautiful; and he wanted you for himself. You find it hard to believe me? Then, why did he force you to marry him? Tell me that!"

Marjorie was white to the lips. Her eyes, wide and terror-stricken, were fixed on his. She was trembling from head to foot.

"But—but," she faltered, "he let me go—immediately after we were married. He let me come here—because I wished it. I have scarcely seen him since."

"You will see him." There was merciless certainty in the rejoinder. "He is playing with you as a cat with a mouse, because he knows—he knows that you are in his power. He has only to close his hand and you are there—a prisoner. How can you escape? How can there be any escape in England for a wife who does not love her husband? And let me tell you that the life of such a one is not worth living. Your mother lived it before you until the misery of it overwhelmed her, and she broke away. Are you going to endure the same fate? Are you going to give yourself to your mother's murderer? If so"—he raised his shoulders with an expressive gesture—"*bueno*, I say good-bye!"

He made as if he would leave her, but wildly, desperately, she caught at his sleeve. "No—no! Don't go! Don't go! Tell me how I can—get away!"

It was a piteous appeal. Possibly, had she had time to consider, she would not have made it. But she was taken by surprise, she was horror-stricken, by the web of evil in which she found herself enmeshed. Her one frantic impulse was to break free, whatever the cost. The six weeks that had elapsed since her marriage had by no means reconciled her to it. Her distrust of Hugo, born of the mystery which he had refused to elucidate, leapt all in a moment to a horror too monstrous to contemplate. She must escape. That was her one thought. She must escape. And in her extremity she turned to this man of whom she knew so little for help. He had been her mother's friend. And it seemed that he was fully prepared to be hers also.

For at her words he stopped, looking at her with his shining, impenetrable eyes. He took her wrists into his slender, wiry hands, holding them in a strangely vibrating grip. And in a moment or two he spoke, his voice vibrant also, and sunk almost to a whisper. "I will help you, *signorina*. Yes, I will help you—as in the days that are gone I helped your mother. I was her friend and comrade. I will be yours. But you must give me the right to act. You must give me the authority."

"I will do anything—anything!" she said.

"*Bueno!* Then I think I can help you. We will not talk of the future—not yet. That will come after. For the present you want—deliverance. And I will deliver you. I will take you away. You shall be my—secretary."

He smiled upon her in a fashion that sent again that curious electric thrill through her.

She shrank a little instinctively. "But he will fetch me back again," she said.

"Oh, no, he will not. I will make that quite impossible." The dark eyes suddenly gleamed. "You need not be afraid of that," he said. "I know how to make you safe. Leave it all to me, *signorina*, and I will not fail you. Only it is a secret between you and me. You will remember that it is a secret!" He spoke insistently.

"Yes—yes." Marjorie's voice quivered. "I am not likely to tell anyone," she said. "They are all against me. Even—even Mrs. Lingarde thinks that—that I ought to go back to him. She told me so—only to-day."

The Italian smiled in a secret subtle fashion, his eyes caressing her the while. "*Bueno!*" he said, softly. "I am on your side. I will be your friend."

They passed by the chancel-gates a little later, and the glory had departed. The place smote cold and chill.

Marjorie shivered as she bade her companion good-bye. She felt as if all the light in the world had gone wholly out and she were left to wander quite alone in the darkness. She did not think that she would ever see the dawn-light again.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BARRIER.

WHEN Hugo arrived at the Palace that evening he found he was the only guest. He presented himself in good time with the vagrant hope that he might see something of Marjorie before his hostess appeared.

But his hope was not fulfilled. He was kept waiting for several minutes, and then it was the Bishop's wife who finally bustled in to relieve his solitude. She looked round as she came, as if she too had hoped to find Marjorie before her.

Hugo shook hands, and immediately asked where she was.

"She must be still upstairs," Mrs. Lingarde told him. "Sit down, won't you? I want to have a little talk. Do you know I am beginning to be a wee bit anxious about her—about you both? You won't think it presumption on my part?"

Hugo's faint smile showed about his lips as he made reply. "No, you are much too kind for that. I believe I know what you are going to say, and, as a matter of fact, I agree with you. She has had time now to recover her balance, and I am going to try and see more of her."

"The worst of it is," said Mrs. Lingarde, "that the Bishop and I are going to the Italian lakes in another three weeks, and, sorry as I shall be to part with her, I don't feel that she ought to go right away with us like that—unless you come too."

"I see." Hugo's face remained perfectly calm. "In that case," he said, "she had better come to me. Miss Lacey is leaving to join an old friend in the North, so I shall be alone."

He spoke conclusively, but Mrs. Lingarde looked far from easy. She regarded him doubtfully, and after a few seconds somewhat impetuously brought herself to speak.

"May I say something rather intimate?"

"Pray say anything you like," Hugo rejoined, courteously.

"Thank you. Well then, Hugo—forgive my impertinence—are you in love with your little wife?"

Silence followed the question—a silence so prolonged that Mrs. Lingarde began to be unpleasantly embarrassed. She forced herself to wait, however, and at length, in his usual, unhurried fashion, Hugo spoke. "Will you tell me why you have asked me that?"

She answered him with a measure of relief. "Just because I am anxious—very anxious—for her happiness. She is so young. I feel sure that you could win her love if—if you wished to do so. Some men, I know, are afraid to show their hands too soon; but I am sure you needn't be. She is very lonely and unhappy, and I am quite powerless to help her. She is intensely reserved with me also, and I don't feel that she is naturally so. I think—I really do think—that if you love her the time has come to let her know it. She seems to be pining for something, grieving secretly. May it not be for that very thing?"

"I don't think so," Hugo said. He got up with the words, and moved to the window. Standing there, with his back to the room, he spoke again. "It would be difficult to explain to you the actual trouble without going very much into detail; but the chief barrier between us is connected with her mother. My reason for taking her away from her was a very sufficient one, but I am under a promise never to tell her what it was."

"Oh, what a mistake!" sighed Mrs. Lingarde.

"Possibly. But it is a wholly irrevocable one." Hugo spoke without turning.

"I see." Mrs. Lingarde looked thoughtful for a moment or two. "But that doesn't prevent you making love to her, does it?" she said then.

"It is a somewhat heavy handicap," said Hugo.

"But you have a chance," urged Mrs. Lingarde.

He turned round, and came back to her. "A hopeless case, I'm afraid," he said; "anyway for the present."

"Aren't you going to try?" she said, persuasively.

He smiled a little. "I am willing to try, but I doubt—I very much doubt—if I shall succeed."

Mrs. Lingarde rose with briskness. "I am going to find dear Marjorie," she said, "and send her in to have a little chat before dinner."

She turned away with the utmost decision, and he did not attempt to detain her. But when she was gone he began to pace the room with most unaccustomed restlessness. Possibly for the first time in his life he was faced with a problem with which he was utterly at a loss how to deal.

Several minutes passed. He ceased to prowl, and stood again at the window, looking out upon the swallow-haunted cloisters. He wore the expression of a man who wrestles with his fate.

Yet, when he heard the door open behind him, he turned with his habitual serenity and moved across the room to greet his young wife.

She stood on the threshold, looking at him, as if afraid to enter. Her face was very pale, and out of it her blue eyes shone with a brilliance almost startling. She did not attempt to speak or give him any kind of welcome.

He came to her, and very gently took her hand. "Why, Marjorie," he said, "am I such a stranger that you can't find anything to say to me?"

She made a sharp movement, as if to avoid his touch; but in the end she suffered it. Her hand lay icy-cold in his.

"Mrs. Lingarde told me you wanted to see me," she said.

Her voice was very low. She seemed to force herself to speak, and as she did so it came to him that the barrier between them had grown to a well-nigh impenetrable wall.

He drew her forward, looking at her with his steady eyes, seeking for some means of surmounting it. "Why, my dear, what has happened?" he said. "Has Mrs. Lingarde been frightening you?"

Her eyes flickered and fell before his look. "No," she said. "No. She only told me—only told me—that Miss Lacey was going, and you wanted me to—to take her place. I can't do it. It's no good asking."

"I never ask anyone to bestow a favour unwillingly," said Hugo, and his smile was momentarily grim. "You needn't regard me as an ogre, my child, until you know for certain that I am going to behave as such."

He kept her hand in his and led her to the window. She did not attempt to resist him, but there was that about her that told of an almost panic-stricken desire to escape.

He waited for a few seconds to give her agitation time to subside; then: "Marjorie," he said, "will you look at me for a moment?"

She cast a swift look upwards, but instantly her quivering eyelids fell again. She stood in palpitating silence.

"No, not like that," he said, gently. "I assure you there is nothing to frighten you. If you will only look me squarely in the face, you will see it for yourself."

But she could not; though he waited with unwavering patience. In the silence that followed he heard the wild throbbing of her heart.

That moved him to a deeper compassion. He drew her nearer. "Marjorie, little girl, what is it? What is it?" he said. "Tell me as a friend. I only want to help you. Don't be afraid of—of hurting me, you know! I'm tough. I can stand it."

That seemed to pierce her. She made a sharp gesture as of one in intolerable pain. Perhaps it was that unexpected falter of his that reached her heart. She turned from him with a piteous little sound, and covered her face. "Oh, don't—don't!" she whispered.

He kept her hand still, but it was the only sign of mastery that he made. "Try not to be afraid of me!" he said. "Try to realize that you've nothing whatever to fear! I'm not going to ask anything of you that you don't want to give. I love you, Marjorie. Don't you understand? And my idea of loving a person is to try to make that person happy."

There was a faintly quizzical air about him as he said it, almost as if he smiled at his own weakness.

"I'm not a selfish beast, dear," he went on. "Believe me, I'm not. It is true that Miss Lacey is going, and that I had thought it possible that you might be persuaded to take pity on my loneliness, and come and keep house for me. But, my child, I never meant, never intended, to force the post of housekeeper upon you as a duty. I want you, I admit; but not against your will."

Marjorie was struggling with herself, but the hot tears were falling through her shielding fingers, and she could not hide them from him. His tenderness hurt her as no harshness could have hurt. She longed to break away, but it seemed to surround her which ever way she turned. It was so hard to remember, when he spoke to her thus, that he could ever be grim, could ever be implacable. And yet—and yet—she had seen him hardened to severity. She knew—so fatally well—what he had done. Ah, if only she had not known! How different life might have been! Very deep within her there stirred a longing such as she had never known before. It was almost more than she could bear. She felt torn in twain, cruelly mutilated. On the one hand the impulse to cast herself into his arms, to cling to him for comfort, urged her. On the other that new-born horror that would have her wrench herself from his hold and flee!

As to denouncing him, the bare thought never crossed her mind. How could she put into words the evil that had blighted her very existence?

He waited for her with a patience that lasted through many seconds, then very quietly he spoke again.

"Is there no hope for me, Marjorie?" he asked.

With a great effort she commanded herself. "I can't—live with you at The Grey House," she said.

"Or anywhere else?" said Hugo.

She was silent.

"Or anywhere else?" he persisted, gently.

"No," she made answer.

"And you won't tell me why?" he said.

She summoned her strength. It had become horribly difficult to refuse him, so difficult that she felt every instant that her resistance would give way.

"I will tell you—the chief reason," she said, and paused.

"Yes?" said Hugo.

She hesitated; then, with a rush, made answer. "I think you know it. You took me away from my mother when she was dying, and I never knew—I never knew till too late."

"By your mother's own wish," he said.

Marjorie's hands clenched. She had not wanted to touch upon the subject. Now that she had done so she regretted it. But at least the desire to yield to him was gone. She drew herself away from him and turned.

But ere she left him his voice arrested her. "Marjorie!"

She paused. He was standing there in the evening light with his steady eyes upon her. She met those eyes for an instant, and felt again as if a sword had reached her heart.

"Is that all you have against me?" he asked. "Have you any other reason for wishing to be quit of me?"

She wrung her hands hard together. "It is a very big reason," she said.

"And you can never bring yourself to forgive me?" he asked.

She tried to speak, but her throat only worked soundlessly. She felt as if that rush of feeling would choke her.

"Won't you try?" Hugo urged, gently. "I want you to love and to care for. Am I never to have the chance of making you happy?"

"You could never make me happy," she said, forcing herself to utterance that was actual physical pain.

"Is that the truth?" he said.

She stood half-turned away. "Yes."

He reached out a hand and lightly touched her shoulder. "You believe it yourself?" he said.

"Yes," she said, again, though how she said it she did not know.

His hand fell. "All right, little Marjorie," he said. "Good-bye!"

She heard him sigh with the word, but she fled without a backward glance. She dared not stay, but the going took all the strength she had. And within her her heart cried like a wounded thing. If only he had been less kind to her—less cruel to her mother!

CHAPTER VII.

THE FLIGHT.

ALL through dinner Marjorie sat pale and quiet, scarcely raising her eyes to speak.

All through dinner Hugo chatted in his calm, unruffled fashion, absolutely sure of himself, absolutely shielded from all prying eyes by that same serene assurance.

The Bishop's wife, watching him, had not the faintest idea as to whether he had met with any success or not. There was neither triumph nor chagrin in his pose. That Marjorie was white and nervous told her little. She regarded it as natural. The poor child was always sad nowadays; but she hoped—how she hoped!—that Hugo had asserted himself. The situation was getting really serious in her opinion. She could not understand how he could have endured it for so long.

She counted upon throwing them together again when dinner was over; but to her amazement Hugo deliberately frustrated this plan. He asked her to show him the garden, and, divining that he had something to say to her, she could not well send Marjorie as a substitute.

She granted the request, therefore, and they strolled forth together in the falling dusk, leaving Marjorie to read the evening paper to the Bishop.

But whatever his reason for desiring another *tête-à-tête* with his hostess, Hugo showed himself in no hurry to unburden himself. He wandered by her side, smoking peacefully, admiring the gardens from every aspect, chatting still in his easy, imperturbable way, behaving as if his mind were occupied with subjects of the most casual description.

She began to lose patience with him at the end of half an hour of this aimless conversation, but yet there was something about him that kept her from directly attacking the matter which she desired so earnestly to discuss. It occurred to her that he had brought her out with the deliberate intention of avoiding any further intercourse with Marjorie, and this idea determined her at once to return. It was absurd of him, it was wrong, to humour her to this extent.

It was nearly dark when she bluntly announced that they had wandered long enough.

He accepted her decision at once. "Yes. I must be getting home," he said.

That seemed to offer a little opening. She asked him how soon Miss Lacey was to leave.

"Oh, quite soon," he answered. "Next week, I believe."

"And you?" she asked, pointedly.

He met the question with a faint smile. "I, Mrs. Lingarde, shall probably give up The Grey House and live in town."

"Hugo!" she said, in shocked surprise.

He paused a moment, then with absolute simplicity he told her what she desired to know. "Marjorie has no wish to join forces with me. Please do not blame her for that! Possibly—when she is a little older—she may see things differently. At present I can only beg you to let her remain in your care. If I can—if I may—I will drop out of her life for a little while. It seems advisable."

He stopped, and in the silence that followed there came to Mrs. Lingarde the sudden, complete certainty of that which she had doubted only two brief hours before.

"Hugo! You love her!" she said.

He answered her very quietly. "Yes, I do. That is why I am going to take this step."

"But, oh, is it a wise one?" questioned Mrs. Lingarde in agitation.

He raised his brows slightly. "Could I do anything else?"

"I don't know. Yes, I think you could. There are other men in the world, you know, Hugo. And she is very beautiful—too beautiful, poor child. What should I do—what should you do—if she fell in love with—well, that Italian sculptor, for instance?"

"My dear Mrs. Lingarde," Hugo said, "you don't suppose, do you, that I am going to stay outside indefinitely? Who is this Italian sculptor? Is there any danger of her falling in love with him?"

"No, no! I don't know that they have even met, though he is constantly in the Cathedral, and she goes there too. No, there is no danger that I am aware of, except that she is so lovely that I feel half afraid to be responsible for her. I will gladly take care of her for you, but I think it is a mistake for you to drop out even for a short time. I do, indeed."

"'SHE IS GONE!' SHE SAID TO HUGO. 'IT IS JUST AS I EXPECTED.'"

She spoke with emphasis, but she did not feel that she was making much impression. He was so exasperatingly patient.

"If you would let her accompany you to the Italian lakes," he said, "I think it would do her a lot of good, and she might get happy again. I can deal with her if she is happy. But Marjorie in trouble beats me out of hand. At present she is half afraid of me. I want her to get out of that. I think she will when she is more normal—more herself. I should be immensely grateful if you would give her the chance."

"Oh, dear!" said the Bishop's wife, in the tone of one who recognizes argument to be futile. "Very well. Anything you wish!"

"You are more than kind," Hugo said.

They went back almost in silence to find the Bishop dozing in solitary content in the drawing-room. His wife awoke him ruthlessly to ask for Marjorie.

He looked round with mild protest. "Dear me. How sudden you are, my dear! She went up to bed some little time ago; she asked me to bid you good night."

"I will go and fetch her down again," said Mrs. Lingarde, with decision.

But Hugo put out a detaining hand. "No, don't! Say good-bye to her for me! That will do quite as well."

But at that unexpectedly and quite completely Mrs. Lingarde's patience vanished. "I will not, Hugo! Sit down while I go and find her!"

She departed with the words, leaving him no choice but to obey.

The Bishop exerted himself to make conversation, and Hugo very politely seconded his efforts. Yet the minutes that followed seemed interminably long. There was an element of strain in the atmosphere.

Then, very suddenly, even precipitately, Mrs. Lingarde reappeared. Her usually ruddy face was white in patches. Her eyes looked almost wild.

"She is gone!" she said to Hugo. "It is just as I expected. You were not firm enough. And she has gone!"

The Bishop started in his chair. "My dear, what can you mean?"

She had a piece of paper in her hand. She waved it at Hugo. "Why did you do it? Oh, why did you do it? I knew you were making a mistake!"

Hugo got up. "May I see it?" he asked.

She gave it to him, gasping hysterically, watching him with tragic expectancy while he carried it to a lamp and bent over it.

The words he read were few and pathetically direct:—

"DEAR, DEAR MRS. LINGARDE,

"You have been so good to me, I hardly know how to write this; but when I tell you that Hugo married me under false pretences perhaps you will understand. Don't be angry, anyway! Please don't be angry!

"I can't stay near Hugo any longer. He is not what he seems. I can't put into words what

he is. I can only tell you that he was the cause of my mother's death. And so I am going away, right away from England, and from all chance of ever seeing him again.

"Thank you very, very much for all your goodness to me! I shall never forget it.

"Always your

"MARJORIE.

"P.S.—You need not be anxious about me. I am going with my mother's best friend, who will take care of me as no one else—except you—ever could."

Hugo looked up. "What is the meaning of that last, I wonder?" he said, musingly.

"Oh, how can you be so calm?" cried Mrs. Lingarde. "It means that Italian sculptor man, I am sure of it. I never liked the man. He looked mysterious and furtive. And her mother had Italian friends, I believe."

Hugo straightened himself. "If you will excuse me," he said, "I think I had better go."

"Go! Of course, you must go! Go and find her, and bring her back! She can't have got very far. She thought I should not find this before morning. She often goes up early to her room, and I seldom disturb her there."

Mrs. Lingarde followed him to the door, incoherent with consternation.

Hugo turned back to her for a moment. His face was perfectly composed, but the grim lines that Marjorie knew and dreaded had banished that slightly quizzical look that generally hovered about his mouth.

"Don't be anxious!" he said. "I shall find her."

He was gone with the words, gone without apparent haste, but with a purpose there was no mistaking.

The clang of the front door a moment later told of his departure, and Mrs. Lingarde sank trembling and powerless into a chair. She had never felt so overwhelmed in all her life before.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE UNKNOWN TONGUE.

THE night-train to London left Compton Regis at half-past ten. Few passengers ever travelled by it, and it generally came in haste and left after a very brief pause in the station.

On that particular evening it was a few minutes behind time. There were only two figures on the dimly-lighted platform, and they kept near the darkest part. It was a night of clouds through which the stars shone dimly here and there.

Scarcely a word passed between them as they waited. They had met under the station-shelter, but there had been only a brief, whispered greeting between them, and then they had passed into the darkness beyond with one consent.

To Marjorie, waiting there with that furtive figure by her side, the whole world seemed unreal again, a place of many troubled dreams. He had urged this step upon her, and impulsively she had taken it; but she had begun to feel that she had acted almost involuntarily, in accordance with some master-plan outside her own brain. She did not feel as if she would ever act on her own initiative again. She did not think definitely of Hugo at all while she waited there. Somewhere at the back of her consciousness there was a numb aching as though she had been stunned by a heavy blow, but the moment for repentance had not come. She was still urged by that power outside herself.

She awaited the coming of the London train as one who awaits the chariot-wheels of Fate, and the darkness all about her was typical of the darkness that filled her soul. She was going blindly forward under the compulsion of a stronger will than hers. No other course seemed possible. There came a distant throbbing on the quiet night-air. The man by her side gave a low mutter of relief.

It was then that from the dim light of the station another figure detached itself, and came towards them. They did not notice its approach. Both were watching for the flare of the incoming train, at present invisible round a bend. And so, with a quiet, purposeful stride, the new-comer drew near and spoke.

"Marjorie, what are you doing here?"

Marjorie turned with a great start that nearly stopped the beating of her heart.

"Hugo!" she gasped.

He came up to her; his face gleamed pale in the gloom. "I think you have made a mistake," he said. "Mrs. Lingarde is very anxious about you. Come! We will go back to her."

His voice was perfectly level, but it held a sternness that she had never heard before. She trembled as it reached her.

Her companion swung round with a violent oath, but of him Hugo took not the smallest notice.

"Come, Marjorie!" he said again. "We will go back."

Marjorie made a sharp movement that might have been of protest or surrender; but the man at her side flung himself fiercely forward.

"This lady is in my company!" he cried, furiously. "She has thrown herself upon my protection. You interfere with her at your peril!"

But again Hugo ignored him, behaving exactly as if he were not there. He touched Marjorie on the shoulder. "Come!" he said. "This has gone far enough."

His tone was imperative, and with those brief words there came to her for the first time a swift and full realization of that authority over her which he had till then forborne to assert. She turned in utter silence and began to walk back.

He walked beside her with the calmness of undisputed possession. They left the Italian almost too infuriated for speech, and behind them the drumming of the approaching train filled the night, drowning all other sounds. Ever afterwards that rush of a coming train was to send a thrill of sheer stark horror through Marjorie's heart.

It drew nearer. Instinctively she glanced round, saw the Italian's dark figure glide up like a serpent behind Hugo; and then, ere she realized, there was a sudden sharp struggle in the darkness.

She heard no sound of voices. The din of

the rushing engine filled her ears. But for a few unutterable seconds there was a confusion of movement that turned her sick. Then the train thundered past her, and one man only was left upon the platform.

That man turned round upon her with snake-like swiftness and caught her by the arm. The train ran on into the station, slowing to a standstill.

"Quick! Quick!" cried a voice in her ear. "You are free now! Come!"

But Marjorie recoiled with hands outspread in horror. "Where is he? Where is he?" she gasped. "What have you done?"

The man laughed, a terrible laugh of triumph. The malignancy of it lived in her brain for long after. "I have rid you of your enemy, *carissima*. The way is now open. Come!"

She stared at him, incredulous, uncomprehending. "What have you done?" she cried again.

He shrugged his shoulders, with a gesture towards the now motionless train. "He fell, *signorina*. A distressing accident, doubtless. But we cannot help him now. We must think of ourselves instead."

His hand was still upon her. He urged her towards the nearest carriage. But she shrank from him with a cry of anguish that seemed to rend her soul. "How could you? How dared you? Where is he? My God! Where is he?"

The guard had just descended from his van. She sprang towards him, but the Italian held her forcibly back. "You can do nothing, I tell you—nothing!" he hissed between his teeth. "He is dead! What of it? The world is before us, and we will go."

She fought with him wildly, a creature distraught, utterly past reason or control. "He is not! He is not! Or if he is—if he is—then I will die too! Let me go—you brute!—you—you—murderer!"

He gripped her fiercely. His grasp was cruel. "Do you want to see his—carrion?" he flung at her, in his dreadful, sibilant whisper. "Do you choose that—rather than freedom with me?"

She struggled with him still, too agonized to care for aught save escape from his unclean touch. "I choose anything—anything—prison—death—rather than to go with you!" she cried back. "How dare you hold me? Ah!" Her words went into a gasp.

She was free, for he flung her from him with a snarling oath that seemed to come from the throat of an animal. Free, but tottering, reeling, powerless! The darkness swam around her, all pricked with swirling points of amazing brightness. The whole world seemed suddenly to have fallen away from her, leaving her drifting helpless in a storm-blast that threatened to annihilate her.

For the passage of many seconds she lived in an anguish of horror that almost bereft her of her senses. Then there came from afar the sound of the train moving on. She heard the banging of doors, the cheery call of voices, and it came to her with a feeling of desolation indescribable that it was all over, all over. And no one knew! No one but herself—and she as good as dead! The wheels of Fate had caught and crushed her life with Hugo's. She was gone—they both were gone from the ken of human existence; and they would wander apart for ever in worlds unknown. Their lives, which might have been welded into one, would never touch again in all the æons that were to come. They were cut asunder for ever. And with that there came upon her such a passion of regret as seemed to tear at the very core of her being. Very curiously, it was only then, when all was over, that she realized—how poignantly and how despairingly!—that her love for him was the greatest thing that she had ever known. And she had denied it—denied it; had told him that he could never make her happy. Oh, irony of Fate! Oh, bitterness of loss! Oh, nameless magic, ever potent, yet speaking ever "in a tongue no man could understand"!

CHAPTER IX.

THE COMING OF THE DAWN.

THE racing storm-blast left her. She came to herself, standing, as it were, stark and lonely on the edge of a world that had gone out. There was no light anywhere, only a wind that moaned to and fro like a wandering spirit moving over desolation, making the loneliness more lonely, whispering despair.

It drew near to her, that spirit. It entered into her. She felt it cold about her heart. Involuntarily she stirred and moaned.

And then, out of the pressing darkness, there came a voice—the voice of another spirit calling to hers, gently, whimsically, almost it seemed deprecatingly.

"Marjorie, are you still there?"

Her heart moved within her, quickening to that voice. Something—it was no volition of her own—impelled her forward.

She found the solid earth beneath her feet, the night-wind in her ears. "Hugo!" she said, and waited with her face to the sky, waited for that spirit-voice to call to her again.

It came, from somewhere beneath her feet, slightly tremulous, yet strangely reassuring. "I'm not dead," it said. "Did you think I was?"

A great quiver went through her. She felt as one who stands on the threshold of the unknown, almost within sight of a great revelation.

"I know you couldn't die," she said. "But, oh, where are you? Where? Where? Shall I never see you again? Hugo! Hugo!"

There was anguish in her voice; there was heart-break in the silence that followed. The night-wind began to moan again, and she thought he had drifted out of her ken. She stood on the edge of the platform, peering downwards, dreading unspeakably the thing she could not see.

And then, sudden and amazing, the truth burst upon her. A hand came upwards out of the blackness, touched her, felt her.

"I'm not dead," he said, again; "not—I fancy—even badly damaged. You needn't be—upset."

She bent and caught the groping hand, held it fast in both her own. "Oh, Hugo!" she said, and burst into an anguish of tears.

His fingers tightened upon hers. She knew

that he pulled himself up on to the platform. He was panting a little, but his hold upon her was firm.

"You needn't cry—on my account," he said, speaking jerkily. "But p'r'aps—p'r'aps you're not! What has become of that blackguard? Did he catch his train?"

She did not attempt to answer him; speech was impossible. Only swiftly and passionately she caught his hand up to her face and kissed it over and over through her tears.

"Ah, don't!" he said, gently. "Don't!"

She pressed it to her bosom; she lifted her face to him all blinded with weeping. She tried to speak; but still she could not. Only her action was eloquent, and he understood it. He put his arm about her.

"Marjorie—Marjorie!" he said.

She clung to him, sobbing terribly, utterly unstrung. The agony through which she had passed—the sudden amazing revelation—the overwhelming reaction—had broken her down completely. In those moments she was stripped of all reserve, she showed him her quivering soul.

He held her for awhile in silence, and presently he slipped his hand free, and put his other arm about her also, holding her closer.

"There! You are better?" he said, at last.

She leaned her head against his shoulder while the paroxysm spent itself and slowly passed. "Oh, Hugo!" she whispered, finally. "If you had been killed! You're sure you're not hurt? You're sure?"

"Quite sure, dear," he made answer, his voice very gentle, yet faintly quizzical also. "I had the sense to lie still. If you had gone with the brute, I should have come on by the next train—as once before."

She uttered a great quivering sob. "Oh, how can you laugh? And how could you imagine that I would go with him after—after——"

He stopped her, as she faltered. "I didn't think so. I counted on his going alone. Now that he has gone—all's well."

She hid her face against him. "How can you say that when I have been so wicked—so wicked? How is it you are not angry with me? You must—must hate me!"

He bent over her; his hold was full of sustaining comfort. "How could I do that? You made a mistake; but don't we all make them? Moreover, I was partly responsible."

"Oh, such a dreadful—dreadful mistake!" she sobbed. "I don't know how it happened—even now. I thought he was a good man. I thought he was to be trusted. My mother trusted him."

Hugo was silent for a moment; then: "Your mother made a mistake, too, Marjorie," he said.

"Ah!" She spoke swiftly, raising her head, as one who reads a startling message by the flashlight of a new understanding. "The same sort of mistake?" she questioned, breathlessly. "Was it? Was it?"

"And she wanted you never to know," Hugo said, gravely.

"Ah!" she said again, and was silent.

Several seconds passed, during which her arms strained closely and ever more closely about him, as if she could not bear to let him go. At last: "Hugo," she whispered, "was that—was that—why you married me?"

"One of the reasons," he said.

"Not the only one?" Her voice held a touch of pleading; her face was raised to his.

"Not the only one—no," he said.

"Ah! Tell me—the others!" she begged him, tremulously. "I—I want—to understand."

She felt his arms tighten about her, and suddenly she was close—close to the beating of his heart. "You won't be afraid—if I tell you?" he questioned, whimsically.

"Of course not—of course not!" She was clinging to him with quivering lips upturned. "Hugo—oh, Hugo!"—a note of rapture sounded in her voice—"I love you—too much—ever to be afraid—again."

His lips found hers; she spoke gaspingly, between his kisses.

And the silence that followed her words held more than speech; for in that silence a man's heart opened to her, and, her soul afire with love's ecstasy, she entered in.

It was nearly an hour later that Marjorie returned alone to the Palace.

Her face was flushed, her eyes shining. So vivid was her beauty that it seemed to the Bishop's wife as if an unearthly glory were all about her, making her radiant.

She met her with outstretched hands. "My dear! My dear!" she said.

Marjorie went straight into her arms. "How kind of you not to be angry! I've just come from Hugo to tell you that it's all right—all right. He is waiting for me to—to take me to The Grey House. But he wouldn't come in. He said you would understand."

Mrs. Lingarde drew back a little to look into the shining eyes. "Marjorie—my dear, what has happened to you?" she said. "You look—you look as if the sun has risen upon you."

Marjorie's hands clung to hers. "Dear Mrs. Lingarde, it has—it has! I can't tell you all to-night. But it has all come right—oh, quite, quite right. And—and—if you can spare me—I am going to—to my husband now."

"If I can spare you!" echoed Mrs. Lingarde, fondly. "But, of course, I can spare you, dear child. Go to him! Go to him and be happy! May the sun always shine on you both!"

"Ah!" Marjorie said, and for a moment something of the old shadow hovered in her clear eyes. "It will! I believe it will! But it was—a very terrible sunrise, dear Mrs. Lingarde. I can't tell you how terrible."

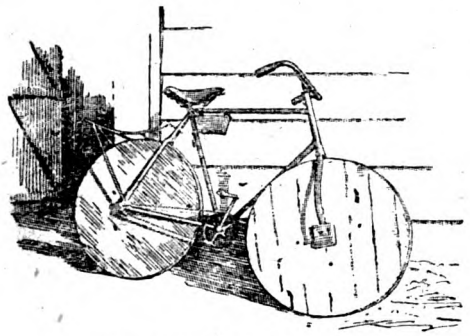
The Bishop's wife kissed her very tenderly. "'God made Himself an awful rose of dawn,'" she quoted, softly. "I think it is often so, my Marjorie, after the night has been very long and dark. The light comes so suddenly that it pierces us to the soul. But—we can never be blind again."

"Never—no, never!" said Marjorie.

And with that solemn and wonderful dawn-light still in her eyes, she turned and went her way.

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]



NOT MADE FOR COMFORT!

THIS bicycle, which is in use on one of the islands in the Grecian Archipelago, gives a capital idea of the extraordinary adaptiveness of our naval boys. Having discovered an old frame, they quickly thought of making it usable, and have put in two wooden wheels. Although the amount of comfort to be obtained in riding is undoubtedly the minimum, still they feel that this is better than none, and those of us who have seen it are the first to agree with them.—Mr. Harold Wm. Wood, Kynance, Somerset Road, Frome.

A CRICKET CURIOSITY.

THE following cricket and mathematical curiosity may puzzle many STRAND readers.

Jones and Smith were the bowlers in a certain cricket match, and their performances are set out below :—

First Innings—

	Runs.	Wickets.	Runs per Wicket.
Jones ..	44 ..	4 ..	11·0
Smith ..	60 ..	6 ..	10·0

Second Innings —

	Runs.	Wickets.	Runs per Wicket.
Jones ..	12 ..	3 ..	4·0
Smith ..	1 ..	1 ..	1·0

It will be noticed that in each innings Smith earned the better bowling average of the two : that is to say, his wickets cost him fewer runs apiece.

But—and here comes in the curious point—add the performances in the two innings, and the following is obtained :—

The two Innings combined :—

	Runs.	Wickets.	Runs per Wicket.
Jones ..	56 ..	7 ..	8·0
Smith ..	61 ..	7 ..	8·5

Jones has the better average of the two when the innings are combined, although he has the worse in each individual innings.

Jones persists in saying that the figures prove him the better bowler ; but others ask how can he be when he was clearly not so good as Smith in each of the two innings. —Mr. William H. Pick, 141, Mare Street, Hackney, London, N.E.

WHAT IS IT?

IN the following puzzle every line except the last contains a clue to the solution, which will be given next month :—

A cedar tree is shady I'll agree,
Yet would not dare to rank itself with me.
Both reeking den and mansion fair I haunt.
If our land seeks to meet the pride-born taunt,
If I've to fight, my clubbed sticks are at hand.
Six days a week the Christian I command.
'Tis even so, and yet I dream of love ;
Freight of all hearts, that lifts the soul above.
Spurn inequality indeed I will,
But entering rich, I'll go out richer still.
With Jack I plough the seas, in Tommy's wake
Unique entrenchments with the spade I make.
Kings do me honour, yet I grace the poor ;
This much I say, I shall not tell you more.

Mr. Hugh L. Tapply, 54, Queen's Park Terrace, Brighton.

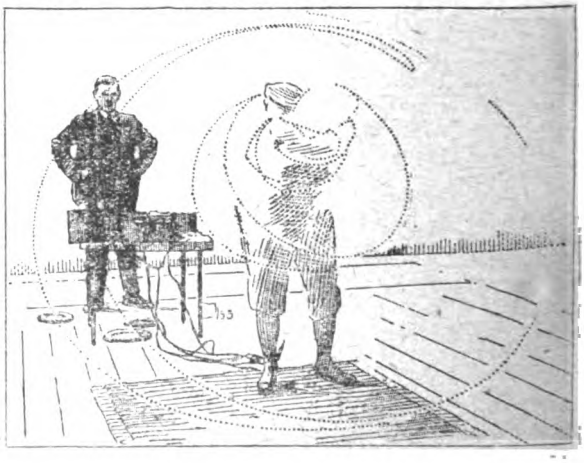
ANALYSING MOTIONS BY PHOTOGRAPHY.

BY fixing electric lights to various parts of the body, and to whatever appliances are in use at the time, Mr. Frank B. Gilbreth, of Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., has been able to obtain some most interesting and valuable photographs of various forms of motion. The accompanying picture illustrates his method.

The subject chosen is a well-known golfer, and the stroke he is playing is a full drive. Lights were fixed to the club head, the right hand of the player, his forehead, and left shoulder.

It will be noted that the downward stroke differs from that taken upwards. The motion of the left shoulder can be traced, also that of the right hand. The light flashed twenty times a second, and if a magnifying glass be used it will be seen that it took about twelve flashes on the upswing, and only six on the downward blow.

This system, in this instance used to study the methods of sportsmen, is more generally employed for industrial problems.—Mr. James F. Butterworth, 24, Linden Gardens, London, W.2.



The "TANKS."
By Col. E. D. SWINTON.

FIRST AUTHORITATIVE ACCOUNT.

SEP 1819

Drink
FRY'S
PURE BREAKFAST
COCOA
"No Better Food."
—Dr. Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E., &c.
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

SHERLOCK HOLMES
Outwits A GERMAN SPY

You can send this Magazine Post Free to the Troops.
See Page 320.

No. 321
VOL 54

8d. net.

SEPTEMBER, 1917.

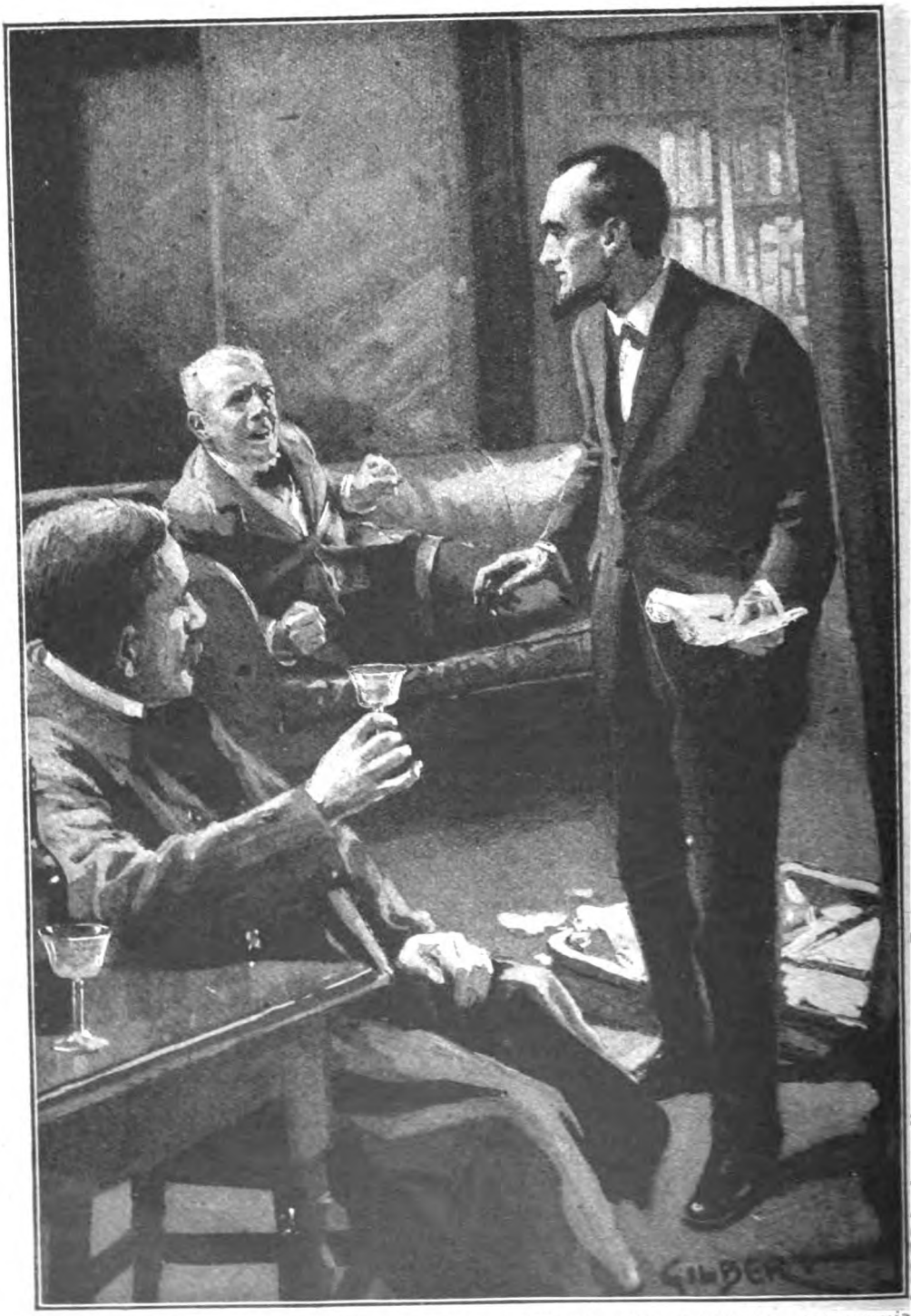
The Wood-Milne Girl *is always smart*

Wood-Milne Rubber Heels

The girl who wears Wood-Milnes is the girl who values her appearance and who won't be "down-at-heel." She has a light and springy tread, always feels bright, avoiding the headaches caused by jolts and jars of the pavement, and she patriotically saves her money in war-time.

Why don't *you* buy a pair of Wood-Milne Heels and Tips to-day? Ask your Bootman to fix them—he stocks all sizes, shapes, and qualities, in Black, Brown, and Grey Rubber, and he's sure to suit your taste.

R428



"'CURSE YOU, YOU DOUBLE TRAITOR!' CRIED THE GERMAN, STRAINING AGAINST HIS BONDS AND GLARING MURDER FROM HIS FURIOUS EYES."

(See page 214.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 54. SEPTEMBER, 1917. No. 321.

His Last Bow.

THE WAR SERVICE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

IT was nine o'clock at night upon the second of August—the most terrible August in the history of the world. One might have thought already that God's curse hung heavy over a degenerate earth, for there was an awesome hush and a feeling of vague expectancy in the sultry and stagnant air. The sun had long set, but one blood-red gash, like an open wound, lay low in the distant west. Above the stars were shining brightly, and below the lights of the shipping glimmered in the bay. The two famous Germans stood beside the stone parapet of the garden walk, with the long, low, heavily-gabled house behind them, and they looked down upon the broad sweep of the beach at the foot of the great chalk cliff on which Von Bork, like some wandering eagle, had perched himself four years before. They stood with their heads close together talking in low, confidential tones. From below the two glowing ends of their cigars might have been the smouldering eyes of some malignant fiend looking down in the darkness.

A remarkable man this Von Bork—a man who could hardly be matched among all the devoted agents of the Kaiser. It was his talents which had first recommended him for the English mission, the most important mission of all, but since he had taken it over those talents had become more and more manifest to the half-dozen people in the world who were really in touch with the truth. One of these was his present companion, Baron Von Herling, the Chief Secretary of the Legation, whose huge hundred-horse-power Benz car was blocking the country lane as it waited to carry its owner back to London.

"Things are moving very fast now and quite in accordance with the time-table. So far as I can judge the trend of events, you will probably be back in Berlin within the week," the secretary was saying. "When you get there, my dear Von Bork, I think you will be surprised at the warm welcome

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you will receive. I happen to know what is thought in the All-Highest quarters of your work in this country." He was a huge man, the secretary, deep, broad, and tall, with a slow, heavy fashion of speech which had been his main asset in his political career.

Von Bork laughed in a deprecating way.

"They are not very hard to deceive, these Englanders," he remarked. "A more docile, simple folk could not be imagined."

"I don't know about that," said the other, thoughtfully. "They have strange, unexpected limits, and one must learn to allow for them. It is that surface simplicity of theirs which makes a trap for the stranger. One's first impression is that they are entirely soft. Then you come suddenly upon something very hard, and you know that you have reached the limit and must adapt yourself to the fact. They have, for example, their insular conventions, which simply *must* be observed."

"Meaning 'good form' and 'playing the game' and that sort of thing?" Von Bork sighed as one who had suffered much.

"Meaning British prejudice and convention, in all its queer manifestations. As an example I may quote one of my own worst blunders—I can afford to talk of my blunders, for you know my work well enough to be aware of my successes. It was on my first arrival. I was invited to a week-end gathering at the country-house of a Cabinet Minister. The conversation was amazingly indiscreet."

Von Bork nodded. "I've been there," said he, dryly.

"Exactly. Well, I naturally sent a *résumé* of the information to Berlin. Unfortunately, our good Chancellor is a little heavy-handed in these matters, and he transmitted a remark which showed that he was aware of what had been said. This, of course, took the trail straight up to me. You've no idea the harm that it did me. There was nothing soft about our British hosts on that occasion, I can assure you. I was two years living it down. Now you, with this sporting pose of yours——"

"No, no; don't call it a pose. A pose is an artificial thing. This is quite natural. I am a born sportsman. I enjoy it."

"Well, that makes it the more effective. You yacht against them, you hunt with them, you play polo, you match them in every game. Your four-in-hand takes the prize at Olympia—I have even heard that you go the length of boxing with the young officers. What is the result? Nobody takes you seriously. You are 'a good old sport,' 'quite a decent fellow for a German,' a hard-drinking, night-club, knock-about-town, devil-may-care young fellow. And all the time this quiet country-house of yours is the centre of half the mischief in England, and the sporting squire—the most astute secret-service man in Europe. Genius, my dear Von Bork—genius!"

"You flatter me, Baron. But certainly I may claim that my four years in this country have not been unproductive. I've never shown you my little store. Would you mind stepping in for a moment?"

The door of the study opened straight on to the terrace. Von Bork pushed it back, and, leading the way, he clicked the switch of the electric light. He then closed the door behind the bulky form which followed him, and carefully adjusted the heavy curtain over the latticed window. Only when all these precautions had been taken and tested did he turn his sunburned, aquiline face to his guest.

"Some of my papers have gone," said he. "When my wife and the household left yesterday for Flushing they took the less important with them. I must, of course, claim the protection of the Embassy for the others."

"Everything has been most carefully arranged. Your name has already been filed as one of the personal suite. There will be no difficulties for you or your baggage. Of course, it is just possible that we may not have to go. England may leave France to her fate. We are sure that there is no binding treaty between them."

"And Belgium?" He stood listening intently for the answer.

"Yes, and Belgium too."

Von Bork shook his head. "I don't see how that could be. There is a definite treaty there. It would be the end of her—and what an end! She could never recover from such a humiliation."

"She would at least have peace for the moment."

"But her honour?"

"Tut, my dear sir, we live in a utilitarian age. Honour is a mediæval conception. Besides, England is not ready. It is an inconceivable thing, but even our special war-tax of fifty millions, which one would think made our purpose as clear as if we had advertised it on the front page of the *Times*, has not roused these people from their slumbers. Here and there one hears a question. It is my business to find an answer. Here and there also there is irritation. It is my

business to soothe it. But I can assure you that so far as the essentials go—the storage of munitions, the preparation for submarine attack, the arrangements for making high explosives—nothing is prepared. How then can England come in, especially when we have stirred her up such a devil's brew of Irish civil war, window-breaking furies, and God knows what to keep her thoughts at home?"

"She must think of her future."

"Ah, that is another matter. I fancy that in the future we have our own very definite plans about England, and that your information will be very vital to us. It is to-day or to-morrow with Mr. John Bull. If he prefers to-day we are perfectly ready, and the readier, my dear Von Bork, for your labours. If it is to-morrow, I need not tell you that we shall be more ready still. I should think they would be wiser to fight with allies than without them, but that is their own affair. This week is their week of destiny. But let us get away from speculation and back to *real-politik*. You were speaking of your papers."

He sat in the armchair with the light shining upon his broad, bald head, while he puffed sedately at his cigar and watched the movements of his companion.

The large oak-panelled, book-lined room had a curtain hung in the farther corner. When this was drawn it disclosed a large brass-bound safe. Von Bork detached a small key from his watch-chain, and after some considerable manipulation of the lock he swung open the heavy door.

"Look!" said he, standing clear, with a wave of his hand.

The light shone vividly into the opened safe, and the secretary of the Embassy gazed with an absorbed interest at the rows of stuffed pigeon-holes with which it was furnished. Each pigeon-hole had its label, and his eyes, as he glanced along them, read a long series of such titles as "Fords," "Harbour-Defences," "Aeroplanes," "Ireland," "Egypt," "Portsmouth Forts," "The Channel," "Rosyth," and a score of others. Each compartment was bristling with papers and plans.

"Colossal!" said the secretary. Putting down his cigar he softly clapped his fat hands.

"And all in four years, Baron. Not such a bad show for the hard-drinking, hard-riding country squire. But the gem of my collection is coming, and there is the setting all ready for it." He pointed to a space over which "Naval Signals" was printed.

"But you have a good *dossier* there already?"

"Out of date and waste paper. The Admiralty in some way got the alarm and every code has been changed. It was a blow, Baron—the worst set-back in my whole campaign. But, thanks to my cheque-book and the good Altamont, all will be well to-night."

The Baron looked at his watch, and gave a guttural exclamation of disappointment.

"Well, I really can wait no longer. You can imagine that things are moving at present in Carlton House Terrace and that we have all to be at our posts. I had hoped to be able to bring news of your great *coup*. Did Altamont name no hour?"

Von Bork pushed over a telegram.

"Will come without fail to-night and bring new sparking-plugs.—ALTAMONT."

"Sparking-plugs, eh?"

"You see, he poses as a motor expert, and I keep a full garage. In our code everything likely to come up is named after some spare part. If he talks of a radiator it is a battleship, of an oil-pump a cruiser, and so on. Sparking-plugs are naval signals."

"From Portsmouth at midday," said the secretary, examining the superscription. "By the way, what do you give him?"

"Five hundred pounds for this particular job. Of course, he has a salary as well."

"The greedy rogue. They are useful, these traitors, but I grudge them their blood-money."

"I grudge Altamont nothing. He is a wonderful worker. If I pay him well, at least he delivers the goods, to use his own phrase. Besides, he is not a traitor. I assure you that our most Pan-Germanic Junker is a peaceful sucking-dove in his feelings towards England as compared with a real bitter Irish-American."

"Oh, an Irish-American?"

"If you heard him talk you would not doubt it. Sometimes I assure you I can hardly understand him. He seems to have declared war on the King's English as well as on the English King. Must you really go? He may be here any moment."

"No; I'm sorry, but I have already overstayed my time. We shall expect you early to-morrow, and when you get that signal-book through the little door on the Duke of York's steps you can put a triumphant *Finis* to your record in England. What! Tokay!" He indicated a heavily-sealed, dust-covered bottle which stood with two high glasses upon a salver.

"May I offer you a glass before your journey?"

"No, thanks. But it looks like revelry."

"Altamont has a nice taste in wines, and he took a fancy to my Tokay. He is a touchy fellow and needs humouring in small things. He is absolutely vital to my plans, and I have to study him, I assure you." They had strolled out on to the terrace again, and along it to the farther end, where, at a touch from the Baron's chauffeur, the great car shivered and chuckled. "Those are the lights of Harwich, I suppose," said the secretary, pulling on his dust-coat. "How still and peaceful it all seems! There may be other lights within the week, and the English coast a less tranquil place! The heavens, too, may not be quite so peaceful, if all that the good Zeppelin promises us comes true. By the way, who is that?"

Only one window showed a light behind them. In it there stood a lamp, and beside it, seated at a table, was a dear old ruddy-faced woman in a country cap. She was bending over her knitting and stopping occasionally to stroke a large black cat upon a stool beside her.

"That is Martha, the only servant I have left."

The secretary chuckled.

"She might almost personify Britannia," said he, "with her complete self-absorption and general air of comfortable somnolence. Well, *au revoir*, Von Bork!" With a final wave of his hand he sprang into the car, and a moment later the two golden cones from the headlights shot forward through the darkness. The secretary lay back in the cushions of the luxurious Limousine with his thoughts full of the impending European tragedy, and hardly observing that as his car swung round the village street it nearly passed over a little Ford coming in the opposite direction.

Von Bork walked slowly back to the study when the last gleams of the motor lamps had faded into the distance. As he passed he observed that his old housekeeper had put out her lamp and retired. It was a new experience to him, the silence and darkness of his widespread house, for his family and household had been a large one. It was a relief to him, however, to think that they were all in safety, and that, but for that one old woman who lingered in the kitchen, he had the whole place to himself. There was a good deal of tidying up to do inside his study, and he set himself to do it until his keen, handsome face was flushed with the heat of the burning papers. A leather valise stood beside his table, and into this he began to pack very neatly and systematically the precious contents of his safe. He had hardly got started with the work, however, when his quick ears caught the sound of a distant car. Instantly he gave an exclamation of satisfaction, strapped up the valise, shut the safe, locked it, and hurried out on to the terrace. He was just in time to see the lights of a small car come to a halt at the gate. A passenger sprang out of it and advanced swiftly towards him, while the chauffeur, a heavily-built, elderly man with a grey moustache, settled down like one who resigns himself to a long vigil.

"Well?" asked Von Bork, eagerly, running forward to meet his visitor.

For answer the man waved a small brown-paper parcel triumphantly above his head.

"You can give me the glad hand to-night, mister," he cried. "I'm bringin' home the bacon at last."

"The signals?"

"Same as I said in my cable. Every last one of them—semaphore, lamp-code, Marconi—a copy, mind you, not the original. The sucker that sold it would have handed over the book itself. That was too dangerous. But it's the real goods, and you can lay to that." He slapped the German upon the shoulder with a rough familiarity from which the other winced.

"Come in," he said. "I'm all alone in the house. I was only waiting for this. Of course, a copy is better than the original. If an original were missing they would change the whole thing. You think it's all safe about this copy?"

The Irish-American had entered the study and stretched his long limbs from the arm-chair. He was a tall, gaunt man of sixty, with clear-cut features and a small goatee beard, which gave him a general resemblance to the caricatures of Uncle Sam. A half-smoked sodden cigar hung from the corner of his mouth, and as he sat down he struck a match and relit it. "Makin' ready for a move?" he remarked, as he looked round him. "Say, mister," he added, as his eyes fell upon the safe from which the curtain was now removed, "you don't tell me you keep your papers in that?"

"Why not?"

"Gosh, in a wide-open contraption like that! And they reckon you to be some spy. Why, a Yankee crook would be into that with a can-opener. If I'd known that any letter of mine was goin' to lie loose in a thing like that I'd have been a mutt to write to you at all."

"It would puzzle any of your crooks to force that safe," Von Bork answered. "You won't cut that metal with any tool."

"But the lock?"

"No; it's a double combination lock. You know what that is?"

"Search me," said the American, with a shrug.

"Well, you need a word as well as a set of figures before you can get the lock to work." He rose and showed a double radiating disc round the keyhole. "This outer one is for the letters, the inner one for the figures."

"Well, well, that's fine."

"So it's not quite so simple as you thought. It was four years ago that I had it made, and what do you think I chose for the word and figures?"

"It's beyond me."

"Well, I chose 'August' for the word, and '1914' for the figures, and here we are."

The American's face showed his surprise and admiration.

"My, but that was smart! You had it down to a fine thing."

"Yes; a few of us even then could have guessed the date. Here it is, and I'm shutting down to-morrow morning."

"Well, I guess you'll have to fix me up too. I'm not stayin' in this goldarned country all on my lonesome. In a week or less, from what I see, John Bull will be on his hind legs and fair rampin'. I'd rather watch him from over the water."

"But you're an American citizen?"

"Well, so was Jack James an American citizen, but he's doin' time in Portland all the same. It cuts no ice with a British copper to tell him you're an American citizen. 'It's British law and order over here,' says he. By the way, mister, talking of Jack James, it seems to me you don't do much to cover your men."

"What do you mean?" Von Bork asked, sharply.

"Well, you are their employer, ain't you? It's up to you to see that they don't fall down. But they do fall down, and when did you ever pick them up? There's James——"

"It was James's own fault. You know that yourself. He was too self-willed for the job."

"James was a bonehead—I give you that. Then there was Hollis."

"The man was mad."

"Well, he went a bit woozy towards the end. It's enough to make a man bughouse when he has to play a part from mornin' to night, with a hundred guys all ready to set the coppers wise to him. But now there is Steiner——"

Von Bork started violently, and his ruddy face turned a shade paler.

"What about Steiner?"

"Well, they've pulled him, that's all! They raided his store last night, and he and his papers are all in Portsmouth Jail. You'll go off and he, poor devil, will have to stand the racket, and lucky if he gets clear with his life. That's why I want to get over the salt water as soon as you do."

Von Bork was a strong, self-contained man, but it was easy to see that the news had shaken him.

"How could they have got on to Steiner?" he muttered. "That's the worst blow yet."

"Well, you nearly had a darned sight worse one, for I believe they are not far off me."

"You don't mean that!"

"Sure thing. My landlady down Fratton way had some inquiries, and when I heard of it I guessed it was time for me to hustle. But what I want to know, mister, is how the coppers know these things? Steiner is the fifth man you've lost since I signed on for you, and I know the name of the sixth if I don't get a move on. How do you explain it, and ain't you ashamed to see your men go down like this?"

Von Bork flushed crimson.

"How dare you speak in such a way?"

"If I didn't dare things, mister, I wouldn't be in your service. But I'll tell you straight what is in my mind. I've heard that with you German politicians when an agent has done his work you are not very sorry to see him put away where he can't talk too much."

Von Bork sprang to his feet.

"Do you dare to suggest that I have given away my own agents?"

"I don't stand for that, mister, but there's a stool pigeon or a cross somewhere, and it's up to you to find out where it is. Anyhow, I am taking no more chances. It's me for little Holland, and the sooner the better."

Von Bork had mastered his anger.

"We have been allies too long to quarrel now at the very hour of victory," said he. "You've done splendid work and taken big risks, and I can't forget it. By all means go to Holland, and you can come with us to Berlin or get a boat from Rotterdam to New York. No other line will be safe a week from now, when Von Tirpitz gets to

"HE WAS GRIPPED AT THE BACK OF HIS NECK BY A GRASP OF IRON, AND A CHLOROFORMED SPONGE WAS HELD IN FRONT OF HIS WRITHING FACE."

work. But let us settle up, Altamont. I'll take that book and pack it with the rest."

The American held the small parcel in his hand, but made no motion to give it up.

"What about the dough?" he asked.

"The what?"

"The boodle. The reward. The five hundred pounds. The gunner turned durned nasty at the last, and I had to square him with an extra hundred dollars or it would have been nitsky for you and me. 'Nothin' doin'!' says he, and he meant it too, but the last hundred did it. It's cost me two hundred pounds from first to last, so it isn't likely I'd give it up without gettin' my wad."

Von Bork smiled with some bitterness. "You don't seem to have a very high opinion of my honour," said he; "you want the money before you give up the book."

"Well, mister, it is a business proposition."

"All right. Have your way." He sat down at the table and scribbled a cheque, which he tore from the book, but he refrained from handing it to his companion. "After all, since we are to be on such terms, Mr. Altamont," said he, "I don't see why I should trust you any more than you trust me. Do you understand?" he added, looking back over his shoulder at the American. "There's the cheque upon the table. I claim the right to examine that parcel before you pick the money up."

The American passed it over without a word. Von Bork undid a winding of string and two wrappers of paper. Then he sat gazing for a moment in silent amazement at a small blue book which lay before him. Across the cover was printed in golden letters, "Practical Handbook of Bee Culture." Only for one instant did the master-spy glare at this strangely-irrelevant inscription. The next he was gripped at the back of his neck by a grasp of iron, and a chloroformed sponge was held in front of his writhing face.

"Another glass, Watson?" said Mr. Sherlock Holmes, as he extended the dusty bottle of Imperial Tokay. "We must drink to this joyous reunion."

The thick-set chauffeur, who had seated himself by the table, pushed forward his glass with some eagerness.

"It is a good wine, Holmes," he said, when he had drunk heartily to the sentiment.

"A remarkable wine, Watson. Our noisy friend upon the sofa has assured me that it is from Franz Joseph's special cellar at the Schoenbrunn Palace. Might I trouble you to open the window, for chloroform vapour does not help the palate."

The safe was ajar, and Holmes, who was now standing in front of it, was removing *dossier* after *dossier*, swiftly examining each, and then packing it neatly in Von Bork's valise. The German lay upon the sofa sleeping stertorously, with a strap round his upper arms and another round his legs.

"We need not hurry ourselves, Watson. We are safe from interruption. Would you mind touching the bell? There is no one in the house except old Martha, who has played her part to admiration. I got her the situation here when first I took the matter up. Ah, Martha, you will be glad to hear that all is well."

The pleasant old lady had appeared in the doorway. She curtsied with a smile to Mr. Holmes, but glanced with some apprehension at the figure upon the sofa.

"It is all right, Martha. He has not been hurt at all."

"I am glad of that, Mr. Holmes. According to his lights he has been a kind master. He wanted me to go with his wife to Germany yesterday, but that would hardly have suited your plans, would it, sir?"

"No, indeed, Martha. So long as you were here I was easy in my mind. We waited some time for your signal to-night."

"It was the secretary, sir; the stout gentleman from London."

"I know. His car passed ours. But for your excellent driving, Watson, we should have been the very type of Europe under the Prussian juggernaut. What more, Martha?"

"I thought he would never go. I knew that it would not suit your plans, sir, to find him here."

"No, indeed. Well, it only meant that we waited half an hour or so on the hill until I saw your lamp go out and knew that the coast was clear. You can report to me to-morrow in London, Martha, at Claridge's Hotel."

"Very good, sir."

"I suppose you have everything ready to leave?"

"Yes, sir. He posted seven letters to-day. I have the addresses, as usual. He received nine; I have these also."

"Very good, Martha. I will look into them to-morrow. Good-night. These papers," he continued, as the old lady vanished, "are not of very great importance, for, of course, the information which they represent has been sent off long ago to the German

Government. These are the originals, which could not safely be got out of the country."

"Then they are of no use?"

"I should not go so far as to say that, Watson. They will at least show our people what is known and what is not. I may say that a good many of these documents have come to him through me, and I need not add are thoroughly untrustworthy. It would brighten my declining years to see a German cruiser navigating the Solent according to the mine-field plans which I have furnished. But you, Watson"—he stopped his work and took his old friend by the shoulders—"I've hardly seen you in the light yet. How have the years used you? You look the same blithe boy as ever."

"I feel twenty years younger, Holmes. I have seldom felt so happy as when I got your wire asking me to meet you at Harwich with the car. But you, Holmes—you have changed very little—save for that horrible goatee."

"Those are the sacrifices one makes for one's country, Watson," said Holmes, pulling at his little tuft. "To-morrow it will be but a dreadful memory. With my hair cut and a few other superficial changes I shall no doubt reappear at Claridge's to-morrow as I was before this American stunt—I beg your pardon, Watson; my well of English seems to be permanently defiled—before this American job came my way."

"But you had retired, Holmes. We heard of you as living the life of a hermit among your bees and your books in a small farm upon the South Downs."

"Exactly, Watson. Here is the fruit of my leisured ease, the *magnum opus* of my latter years!" He picked up the volume from the table and read out the whole title, "'Practical Handbook of Bee Culture, with some Observations upon the Segregation of the Queen.' Alone I did it. Behold the fruit of pensive nights and laborious days, when I watched the little working gangs as once I watched the criminal world of London."

"But how did you get to work again?"

"Ah! I have often marvelled at it myself. The Foreign Minister alone I could have withstood, but when the Premier also deigned to visit my humble roof——! The fact is, Watson, that this gentleman upon the sofa was a bit too good for our people. He was in a class by himself. Things were going wrong, and no one could understand why they were going wrong. Agents were suspected or even caught, but there was evidence of some strong and secret central force. It was absolutely necessary to expose it. Strong pressure was brought upon me to look into the matter. It has cost me two years, Watson, but they have not been devoid of excitement. When I say that I started my pilgrimage at Chicago, graduated in an Irish secret society at Buffalo, gave serious trouble to the constabulary at Skibbereen, and so eventually caught the eye of a subordinate agent of Von Bork, who recommended me as a likely man, you will realize that the matter was complex. Since then I have been honoured by his confidence, which has not prevented most of his plans going subtly wrong and five of his best agents being in prison. I watched them, Watson, and I picked them as they ripened. Well, sir, I hope that you are none the worse?"

The last remark was addressed to Von Bork himself, who, after much gasping and blinking, had lain quietly listening to Holmes's statement. He broke out now into a furious stream of German invective, his face convulsed with passion. Holmes continued his swift investigation of documents, his long, nervous fingers opening and folding the papers while his prisoner cursed and swore.

"Though unmusical, German is the most expressive of all languages," he observed, when Von Bork had stopped from pure exhaustion. "Halloa! Halloa!" he added, as he looked hard at the corner of a tracing before putting it in the box. "This should put another bird in the cage. I had no idea that the paymaster was such a rascal, though I have long had an eye upon him. Dear me, Mister Von Bork, you have a great deal to answer for!"

The prisoner had raised himself with some difficulty upon the sofa and was staring with a strange mixture of amazement and hatred at his captor.

"I shall get level with you, Altamont," he said, speaking with slow deliberation. "If it takes me all my life I shall get level with you."

"The old sweet song," said Holmes. "How often have I heard it in days gone by! It was a favourite ditty of the late lamented Professor Moriarty. Colonel Sebastian Moran has also been known to warble it. And yet I live and keep bees upon the South Downs."

"Curse you, you double traitor!" cried the German, straining against his bonds and glaring murder from his furious eyes.

"No, no, it is not so bad as that," said Holmes, smiling. "As my speech surely shows you, Mr. Altamont of Chicago had

"HOLDING EITHER ARM, THE TWO FRIENDS WALKED HIM VERY SLOWLY DOWN THE GARDEN PATH."

no existence in fact. He was a concoction, a myth, an isolated strand from my bundle of personalities. I used him and he is gone."

"Then who are you?"

"It is really immaterial who I am, but since the matter seems to interest you, Mr. Von Bork, I may say that this is not my first acquaintance with the members of your family. I have done a good deal of business in Germany in the past, and my name is probably familiar to you."

"I would wish to know it," said the Prussian, grimly.

"It was I who brought about the separa-

tion between Irene Adler and the late King of Bohemia when your cousin Heinrich was the Imperial Envoy. It was I also who saved from murder by the Nihilist Klopman, Count Von und Zu Grafenstein, who was your mother's elder brother. It was I——"

Von Bork sat up in amazement.

"There is only one man——" he cried.

"Exactly," said Holmes.

Von Bork groaned and sank back on the sofa. "And most of that information came through you!" he cried. "What is it worth? What have I done? It is my ruin for ever!"

"It is certainly a little untrustworthy," said Holmes. "It will require some checking, and you have little time to check it. Your admiral may find the new guns rather larger than he expects and the cruisers perhaps a trifle faster."

Von Bork clutched at his own throat in despair.

"There are a good many other points of detail which will no doubt come to light in good time. But you have one quality which is very rare in a German, Mr. Von Bork: you are a sportsman, and you will bear me no ill will when you realize that you, who have outwitted so many other people, have at last been outwitted yourself. After all, you have done your best for your country and I have done my best for mine, and what could be more natural? Besides," he added, not unkindly, as he laid his hand upon the shoulder of the prostrate man, "it is better than to fall before some more ignoble foe. These papers are now ready, Watson. If you will help me with our prisoner I think that we may get started for London at once."

It was no easy task to move Von Bork, for he was a strong and a desperate man. Finally, holding either arm, the two friends walked him very slowly down the garden path, which he had trod with such proud confidence when he received the congratulations of the famous diplomatist only a few hours before. After a short final struggle he was hoisted, still bound hand and foot, into the spare seat of the little car. His precious valise was wedged in beside him.

"I trust that you are as comfortable as circumstances permit," said Holmes, when the final arrangements were made. "Should I be guilty of a liberty if I lit a cigar and placed it between your lips?"

But all amenities were wasted upon the angry German.

"I suppose you realize, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said he, "that if your Government bears you out in this treatment it becomes an act of war?"

"What about your Government and all this treatment?" said Holmes, tapping the valise.

"You are a private individual. You have no warrant for my arrest. The whole proceeding is absolutely illegal and outrageous."

"Absolutely," said Holmes.

"Kidnapping a German subject."

"And stealing his private papers."

"Well, you realize your position, you and your accomplice here. If I were to shout for help as we pass through the village——"

"My dear sir, if you did anything so foolish you would probably enlarge the too-limited titles of our village inns by giving us 'The Dangling Prussian' as a sign-post. The Englishman is a patient creature, but at present his temper is a little inflamed, and it would be as well not to try him too far. No, Mr. Von Bork, you will go with us in a quiet, sensible fashion to Scotland Yard, whence you can send for your friend Baron Von Herling and see if even now you may not fill that place which he has reserved for you in the Ambassadorial suite. As to you, Watson, you are joining up with your old service, as I understand, so London won't be out of your way. Stand with me here upon the terrace, for it may be the last quiet talk that we shall ever have."

The two friends chatted in intimate converse for a few minutes, recalling once again the days of the past, whilst their prisoner vainly wriggled to undo the bonds that held him. As they turned to the car Holmes pointed back to the moonlit sea and shook a thoughtful head.

"There's an east wind coming, Watson."

"I think not, Holmes. It is very warm."

"Good old Watson! You are the one fixed point in a changing age. There's an east wind coming all the same, such a wind as never blew on England yet. It will be cold and bitter, Watson, and a good many of us may wither before its blast. But it's God's own wind none the less, and a cleaner, better, stronger land will lie in the sunshine when the storm has cleared. Start her up, Watson, for it's time that we were on our way. I have a cheque for five hundred pounds which should be cashed early, for the drawer is quite capable of stopping it, if he can."

CONFESSIONS OF A CENSOR-FIGHTER.

By WILLIAM G. SHEPHERD.

How much does the censorship affect the news? Mr. Shepherd has had wide experience on which to base an answer. He has reported the war from every important battle-front in Europe. He has had to submit copy to the censors of almost every warring nation. As correspondent of the United Press he described the destruction of Belgium; he was the only newspaper-man who saw the second battle of Ypres; he was the first American reporter permitted at the British front in France. He has been at the German front; with the Austrians at Przemysl; with the Italians in the Trieste district. He reported four of the greatest retreats of the war, including the retreat of the Austrians, and later that of the Serbians, from Serbia. This article, which could only have been written by the representative of a neutral nation, answers the questions we have all asked about the censorship in reading our war news.

STARTED my war-reporting as a censor-fighter.

Censorship distorts the news, and any inexperienced and conscientious war-reporter considers himself justified in censor-baiting. He starts out in his career of war-reporting as a "bad man," belligerent for truth, feeling that there is a certain holiness in his attitude.

But the censor's big blue pencil will, in time, bring every war-reporter to repentance. If it doesn't, then his career as a war-reporter is irrevocably ended and he'll probably go back home.

You can't be a war-reporter in these days and not be "good."

During the past three years I have been continuously under censorship, even as to my personal correspondence. I started out, as I have said, a censor-fighter; and I've had my share of luck at the game. But fourteen censorships through which I have passed (and I have written copy that has been censored by three European nations at a time) have taught me a better way, of which I shall write later.

I felt my duty to my editors demanded that I should outwit all the censors who came my way. After a short experience of a few rather newsless days on the Ally side, I went into Germany, and there my first experience confirmed my belief that censors were my enemies, and put me on the offensive against the whole tribe of them. The experience was this.

In the city of Munich I wrote a harmless but colourful story about war-conditions in the town, and took it to the office of the censor. He was an elderly German colonel, highly decorated, who spoke English excellently. He greeted me effusively, as I laid the copy on the high desk where he stood at work.

"An American!" he exclaimed. "I'm very glad to meet you. America to-day is the conscience of the world; all the rest of us have gone mad. It will please me greatly to help you get the truth back to your country. The truth is all that we Germans ask."

He read over my story, folded it up without changing a word, and handed it to me with the envelope.

"You may mail it yourself," he said. "I'm sure I can trust you."

I opened the folded manuscript and started to write the word "Censored" on it.

In a flash his kindness fell away. "Please do not say that your article has been censored," he said. "Let it go just as it is."

I was forced, of course, to yield to his demand. But there was a lie in that piece

of manuscript; the absence of the word "Censored" was a lie that warped the news-value of my story. The object of omitting that one word was to carry to the outside world the impression that Germany was not hindering newspapermen in their expression of opinion.

Censorship, as I understood it at the time, was intended to cover military and political contingencies; here it was covering a lie which I was being forced to send to a neutral country.

Let me say, incidentally, that, while I have never known a censor to add words or phrases to a newspaper story that would change its meaning, nevertheless they have often changed the whole intent

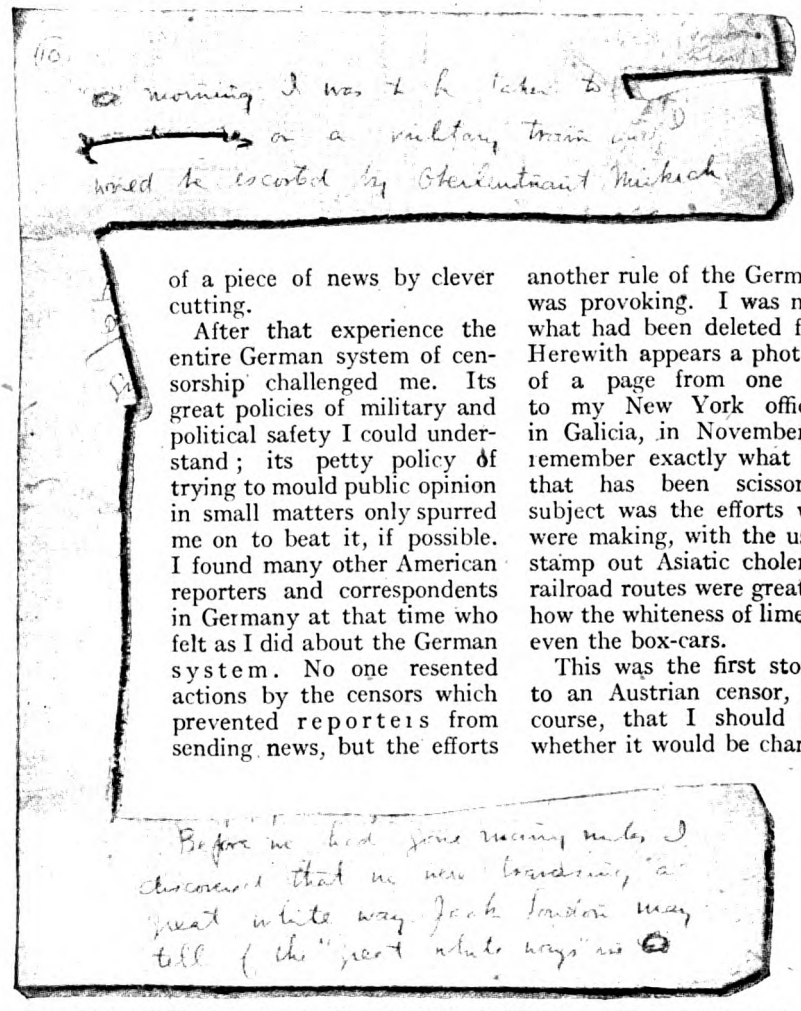
"LET IT GO JUST AS IT IS."

of a piece of news by clever cutting.

After that experience the entire German system of censorship challenged me. Its great policies of military and political safety I could understand; its petty policy of trying to mould public opinion in small matters only spurred me on to beat it, if possible. I found many other American reporters and correspondents in Germany at that time who felt as I did about the German system. No one resented actions by the censors which prevented reporters from sending news, but the efforts of the censorship system to use the reporters as tools in influencing neutral opinion was highly offensive.

There was another rule of the German censorship which was provoking. I was not allowed to know what had been deleted from my despatches. Herewith appears a photographic illustration of a page from one of my letters sent to my New York office from Przemysl, in Galicia, in November, 1914. I do not remember exactly what I wrote in the part that has been scissored out; but my subject was the efforts which the Austrians were making, with the use of slaked lime, to stamp out Asiatic cholera. I told how the railroad routes were great "white ways," and how the whiteness of lime covered everything, even the box-cars.

This was the first story I had submitted to an Austrian censor, and I expected, of course, that I should be informed as to whether it would be changed or not. It was not until many months later that I knew how my stuff was being cut. Instead of being taken into the confidence of the censor, all the writers in our party were looked upon with deep suspicion. Indeed,



WHAT AN AUSTRIAN CENSOR, WHO FELT THAT SCISSORS WERE SAFER THAN PENCIL, DID TO THE PAGES OF A DESPATCH SENT BY MR. SHEPHERD FROM PRZEMYSL, IN GALICIA.

the whole attitude of the censor was one of distrust and challenge.

There came suddenly one day the retreat from Przemysl, when we were put on trains and bundled off towards Budapest. We were informed that any stories which pictured our departure from Przemysl as a hasty retreat would be held up; and there was no way of getting anything out without submitting it to the censor. Here was a story to beat a censor with. In an hotel at Budapest I sat down to a typewriter and drew forth all my stock of slang. I tried to think of the fastest thing that runs, and my mind settled on Kolehmainen, the great Finnish Marathon runner. I began my story thus: "Beating it from Przemysl was one grand Kolehmainen." I wrote thirty paragraphs of the sheerest slang, describing the retreat like a star baseball writer.

"NO MAN WITH A HEAD SHAPED LIKE HIS EVER ADMITTED THAT THERE WAS ANYTHING IN THE WORLD HE DIDN'T KNOW."

Our language-loving censor, who was inordinately proud of his ability to speak seven tongues, never winked an eye over that copy; the chances were that he did not understand one-third of it; but no man with a head shaped like his ever admitted that there was anything in the world he didn't know. The story went.

I had fully expected that the office in New York would decode, or deslang, the story; but it didn't. Out over the wires to every corner of the United States went the story of that gruesome retreat, written in baseball slang; and several editors wrote to the New York office suggesting that I should turn out "some more of that snappy stuff, like the Przemysl retreat."

The Austrian disliked me when the echoes of that slangy Przemysl retreat story began to come back to Vienna.

A certain New York newspaper manager, who felt that he was not getting a sufficient news return for the money he was spending, got on a boat, a month or so after the war had started, determined to go to London and have it out with the censors. He felt that a little New York *vim* was needed in his London bureau. "I'm going to pull a little fast New York stuff," he said. With his London manager, he went to the censor's bureau. It was only by a persistent clamour that they reached a bureau censor.

"Now, look here," said the New York man; "my newspapers are not trying to harm the British Government. We want to work with the censor, not against him. Won't you tell us how we can co-operate with the censor?"

"My dear man," said the Britisher, "we don't need any co-operation. This is purely a one-sided affair. Good day."

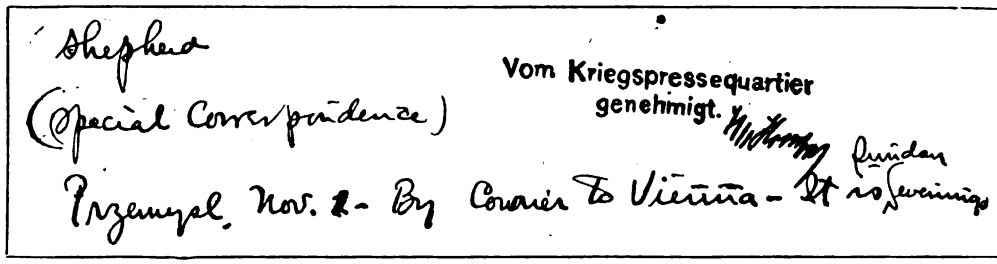
Every word of war-news which comes from Europe to the eyes of the American public has been weighed by censors as carefully as precious stones are weighed by diamond merchants. One tiny word, or arrangement of words, may send to the bottom of the sea a great ship or may cost the lives of thousands of men in the field. It's all up to the censor. As he sits at his table with telegrams, letters, and the stories of newspaper correspondents passing under his gaze, and with the weight of his country's welfare resting, to no small extent, on his shoulders, every little nervous fear of treachery, every whim of his mind, is expressed by his use of scissors or blue pencil.

"*Father is dead*," ran a cablegram from Sweden to New York which passed through the British censorship.

For some inexplicable reason the censor didn't like the word "dead." He changed it to "deceased."

Within a short time this question, sent from New York to Sweden, passed through the hands of the same censor: "*Is father dead or deceased?*"

The more I see of the censor's job, the more I sympathize with the censor, and the more I prefer to be the man who writes the stuff rather than the one who censors it.



THE SIGNATURE OF AN AUSTRIAN CENSOR AT PRZEMYSL.

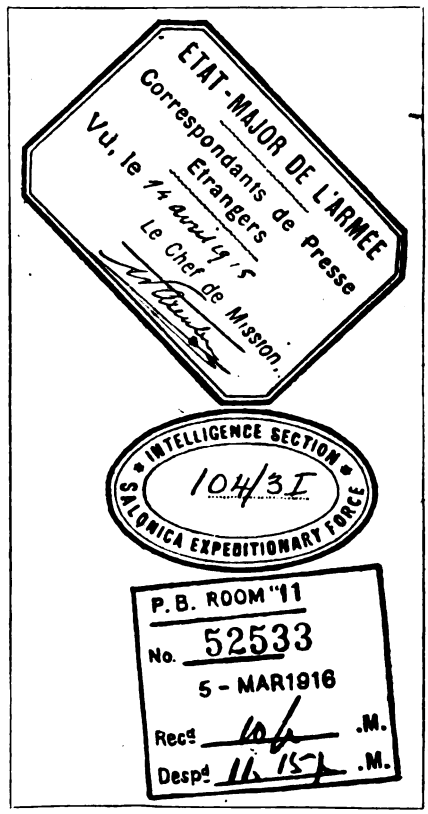
The mistakes of a writing-man in war-time can hardly be fatal, but the error of a censor may flame out in a catastrophe at any time. With unlimited power, he has the right to give himself the benefit of the doubt every time a doubt rises.

An excellent illustration of how the censors are always on the alert comes to my mind in connection with an interview that I had with Winston Churchill when he was First Lord of the British Admiralty in the early war-days. During the many visits I paid to the dusty and historic old Admiralty building and the several conferences I had with Churchill in his private office, I began to feel at home in Admiralty surroundings. I became acquainted with a number of secretaries. I chatted with them in the hallways. I was introduced to some important officials who knew that I was preparing an important article for American newspapers. Usually it was an extremely difficult matter even to enter the doors of the Admiralty building; but the doormen and the policemen in the hallways, knowing my important mission, always greeted me pleasantly and permitted me to pass without question.

I proudly felt that I had been taken into the confidence of all the Admiralty folk about me, and I'd undergo shooting to-day rather than tell, even at this late time, some of the matters which came to my knowledge during that pleasant two weeks.

At last the interview was finished and written exactly as it was to go. Mr. Churchill, one evening at five o'clock, put his signature to it, called his secretary, and said: "Please take Mr. Shepherd to the censor's office and introduce him. Tell the censor that the interview with me is all right."

I was led through a maze of gloomy hallways, lighted in part by gas, to a doorway which bore the legend "Naval Censor."



THE FIRST SEAL IS THAT OF THE FRENCH ARMY CENSOR, THE SECOND THAT OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN THE FIELD, AND THE THIRD A BRITISH PRESS BUREAU SEAL.

"This is Sir So-and-so, the naval censor," said the secretary, presenting me to a strong-featured, iron-grey-haired man. "This is Mr. Shepherd, an American journalist, who is sending an interview with the First Lord to America to-night."

"Very well," said the man of title, "we'll take care of it."

"I want to write just a few words to lead the story," I said. I explained that my manuscript contained only the interview, and that it would be necessary to write a short introduction.

For the first time in my two weeks around the Admiralty I saw distrust in the eyes of an Admiralty man. The policemen at the door might have trusted me: that was their business. The secretaries might have done the same: that was their look-out. Winston Churchill might have placed confidence in my

journalistic integrity: Churchill could do as he pleased. But as for himself, he was neither a policeman, a secretary, nor the First Lord: he was the censor, whose duty is to mistrust. He was the last sieve through which my work was to pass. If I were pro-German and mine a spy's work, now was the last chance to stop it. He read the manuscript carefully.

When he had finished he looked up into my face and said: "You want to write an introduction to this, eh?"

"Yes," I answered. "It starts out too abruptly for an American newspaper story."

He hesitated a minute. Then he said: "All right. Write it here. But listen! No hanky-panky!" He looked me square in the eye.

I knew what he meant by that phrase. He meant: "These fellows around here may trust you, but I don't. I'm the censor and you're a newspaper-man. Every reporter's a wrong 'un to me until he proves he's right. I know you've got an interview with the First Lord of the British Admiralty. I know it's what you call a big newspaper stunt, and that, by to-morrow morning, it will be read by millions and millions of human beings in many languages, and that it will be telling England's side of the war to the world. But none of that impresses me. I'm not going to give you the benefit of any doubt. If you are a wrong 'un, look out!"

"Write an introduction yourself," I suggested.

"Go ahead with yours," he said, grimly.

I wrote, with a lead-pencil, at the head of the article, these words: "Winston Churchill, First Lord of the British Admiralty, granted me an interview to-day," and pushed the copy over to him.

"Is that all?" he said, more gently.

"I can't think of any more to say," I answered.

"Very good," he said, smiling, as I rose to go. "I was afraid you were going to write something intricate."

He telephoned to the cable-office, ordered that the interview should be given right-of-way, and within fifty-five minutes the story was in New York.

He had been protecting England and himself. As a censor he was a hundred-per-center. But he was not a friend of newspaper-men. A good censor and a good war-reporter can never be real friends—unless the war-reporter is working with his own army and is moved by patriotism.

Considering the censor's responsibility, it is always a source of wonder to me that he ever lets anything go through. In my extensive dealings with censors I have been more surprised at what they have permitted me to send than at what they have cut out. Whatever success any of the American correspondents have had in getting "tough" war-stories past the censor has grown out of the fact that they sympathized with him and tried to get his view-point.

In the office of a great news association recently the editor showed me a pile of typewritten copy which had been sent by mail from a certain capital in Europe. The signature of a censor was at the bottom of each page, but not one word of the several thousand had been touched with a blue pencil.

"The censors hardly ever touch our stuff now," explained the editor. "Early in the war it used to be all chopped up, but it comes pretty clean these days."

This editor did not mean to say that the censorship had become lax. He knew as well as I did that the reason for the untouched pages was that the correspondents in Europe had learned to take the censor's view-point and to see the war through the censor's eyes. The American correspondent in any of the European countries these days knows very well that *it does not pay to try to beat the censor.* This is the one big fact that stands out just now in the war-correspondent's life.

Not many months ago an American correspondent left New York for London carrying a code for the use of his London office. By means of this code the New York office hoped to receive more complete news of the sinking of ships than the censor had permitted to go out. At the risk of a severe penalty, the New York reporter had got the code past the port authorities, and he slammed it down triumphantly on the desk of the London manager.

"There's a code that'll beat 'em all," said the New Yorker.

The experienced London manager, with an expression of long-suffering patience on his face (for his New York office had been clamouring persistently for "more news"), took the precious papers, slowly tore them into bits, and tossed them into the glowing fireplace.

"Nothing like that here," he said. "If our papers print more news about the sinking of ships than the other papers do, our crime'll stand out like a sore thumb. The better a code is, the more dangerous it is."

In a little château at Goritzia, on the

Austro-Italian front, not many months ago, the Austrian staff-officers gave an after-dinner concert for a few correspondents. The staff-officer who acted as censor was not a music-lover, and he departed from the gathering before the programme was ended. The finale was an "Ave Maria," exquisitely played by piano, 'cello, and several violins, and the effect was highly sentimental. The next day one of the correspondents, writing of the concert, told how thoughts of home and loved ones had come over the war-bound officers as they had listened to the strains of the beautiful old air. He wrote that "chins dropped to chests and heads were bowed, in contemplation and reverie, while the cannon boomed out above the sad music."

"No 'chins dropped to chests' in that crowd," said the non-music-loving censor, as he read the story. "I don't want the world to think that Austrian officers ever feel sad." And his blue pencil cut out every reference to the sweet spell which the music, amid the sound of guns, had thrown over the Austrian leaders.

"'THERE'S A CODE THAT'LL BEAT 'EM ALL,' SAID THE NEW YORKER."

Very often the personal pride of a censor in his ability to read and write a foreign language will appear in his work. A certain American correspondent, describing the spring flowers in the vicinity of the trenches, wrote of anemones, violets, and "john-quills." Evidently the misspelling hurt the French censor as much as it hurts an American reader, for, in a firm, aggressive script, he dashed out the offending word and wrote over it the letters J-O-N-Q-U-I-L-S.

An Austrian censor, when I wrote the word "worshipper," cut out one "p." The dictionary discloses that we were both right, as the word is a variant.

Young censors will invariably thrust forward their personal opinion in their work.

"Go to Vienna and discover why the Austrians will not permit Emmy Destinn to come to the United States," was an assignment which an American correspondent in Berlin received some time ago from his New York office. The correspondent complied and secured a highly-interesting story. The Austrians, he explained, felt that Destinn had not shown as much loyalty to the Austrian cause as might have been expected of her, and so the permission that had been granted her to visit the United States had been revoked. The reporter put the story through the Austrian censor and telegraphed it to Berlin, to be forwarded from there by wireless. When he returned to Berlin two days later he found that the story was being held up in the office of the German censor.

"What's the matter with that story?" he demanded of the censor who had held it. "The Austrian censors passed it all right."

"Well, they were wrong in doing it," said the censor. "You're painting this woman as a martyr."

"Give me the copy," said the reporter. He took it to the office of Count George Wedel, the chief censor, a patron of music in Germany, and related his troubles.

"Why, the —— fool!" said Count Wedel. "Every person in the United States who loves music has a right to know why Destinn isn't singing to them this year." And he permitted the story to pass.

Later investigation disclosed that the man who had stopped the story was acting as a temporary censor, and had been on the job only two days.

In the days of the enmity between correspondents and censors, when life was one long fight between them, Karl H. von Wiegand, the noted Berlin correspondent, achieved, perhaps, the biggest defeat of the censorship that will be recorded in the war. It is not generally known that Von Wiegand's interview with the Crown Prince of Germany had to be smuggled out of the country. Von Wiegand reached the Crown Prince through unofficial channels, and, after talking with him for several hours, returned to Berlin and wrote his story, in his office at 77, Zimmerstrasse. Before many

hours had elapsed angry officialdom learned that Von Wiegand had talked with the Crown Prince without its permission, and was writing a story about the visit.

The censor of the Foreign Office sent to Von Wiegand's office demanding that the story should be turned over to the censor. Von Wiegand refused, and said that he would not discuss the matter with any less person than the chief censor himself. As soon as the censor had left his office Von Wiegand hired a courier and started him on his way to Holland with the story. The courier got through, and when Von Wiegand learned that the story had safely reached London he took a copy of the interview to the Foreign Office and submitted it, saying, "You may cut this copy as you like. My story is on the way to the United States by this time."

The British, let me say, are inclined to put a correspondent on his honour; or, at least, they are inclined to let him go as far as he wants to and then expect him to suffer whatever punishment he brings to himself, if he goes too far. On the night of September 8th, 1915, a Zeppelin, hovering over London, gave the city its first taste of death from the skies. The Zeppelin had hardly disappeared before the Press Bureau sent word to all the newspapers, and to the American and other correspondents, that they were not even to *submit* to the censor any stories of the raid, much less *publish* or *cable* them. The Press Bureau then sent out a short formal statement, saying that a Zeppelin had visited the Eastern Counties and the London district.

Bursting with our stories, we American reporters found it impossible to contain ourselves. Several of us did *submit* stories, and I have heard that several correspondents were threatened with punishment for having done so. I was among those who gave a story to the censor. I wrote that story, weighing every word, just as the censor would weigh it. I did not give localities; I did not tell what the Zeppelin had done to London, but what it had done to the minds of London people. London had been brave—and I said so; London had got mad, instead of scared, and recruiting began to jump that very evening—and I said that, too. And, twenty-four hours later, to my great delight, I learned by cable from New York that my Zeppelin-raid story had gone through and had been the only story to reach New York. I attribute my success with that story to the fact that I put myself in an Englishman's place and wrote the story as he would have written it.

I got over a second story about the raid the next day. I had an engagement to interview Marconi the morning after the raid; I had planned to ask him questions about the use of wireless in the war. When I entered his office I found him sleepy and fagged.

"I was up until an unearthly hour this morning," he said.

"Did you chase the Zeppelin?" I asked.

"Everywhere!" he exclaimed. "I got a taxicab, and I went to all the fires and I saw all the horrible sights."

"Mr. Marconi," I said, "you and Count Zeppelin are the two most picturesque inventors of this century. Will you tell me, for publication, what you think of the work of your fellow-inventor, from what you saw last night?"

"Thank God," said Marconi, ardently, "they can't use my invention to kill women and children, as they used Zeppelin's last night! If I were Zeppelin I would demand of my emperor that he should cease the use of my invention for such terrible purposes."

There was my Zeppelin-raid story. In Marconi's own words I cabled a description of the fires and deaths in the heart of London. And not a word was changed by the censor; it was the kind of a story, I think, that the censor would have liked to send out himself.

"You seem to have arrived at the point where you sympathize with the censor," said a friend, after reading certain parts of what I have written above.

I don't exactly sympathize with the censor. But I have seen enough of war to know that the side which dropped censorship would be immediately defeated on land and sea.

SEAL OF THE KAISER'S CENSORS. PLACED AT TOP AND BOTTOM OF ALL DESPATCHES.

BLIND CHANCE.

By FRED M. WHITE.

Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

THERE was no light in the big room except the deep orange glow of the fire on the broad stone hearth, so that the rest was merged in the shadows—shadows velvety black, with suggestions of light here and there such as Rembrandt loved to paint. A fine, big room, radiating comfort and luxury, and refined silence, as if the world were very far away; which, indeed, it was, for the old house nestled on the edge of Whinborough Common, over against the golf-links, the only house within two miles of where it stood.

On either side of the fire were deep arm-chairs, merely suggested in that velvety gloom; in the big bay window a roll-top desk, which was the only modern note in the house. And round about that roll-top desk there played, presently, little violet specks of light in thin, dagger-like flashes, hardly visible in themselves, but quite sufficient for their purpose. There came, too, suddenly, a touch of the keen October air, as if a window had been suddenly opened. And after that a faint creaking sound as if, perchance, the top of the desk had been pushed back very quietly and cautiously, followed by a fat and greasy chink, as if two coins had come in contact one with the other. Then a minute disc of violet light concentrated itself upon a little heap of sovereigns and the crisp outline of a bank-note or two. All this with no more sound than a mouse would have made behind the old oak panelling there at the back of the velvet-black shadows; but it was sufficient for one man there.

He leant forward out of the depths of his big arm-chair where he had been seated, listening and sniffing up the damp pungency of the dew-drenched night, seated there as if he had been part and parcel of the shadows. There was just a tiny click, and the room was flooded with light.

"Come along," the man in the arm-chair said. "Sit there in the chair opposite me."

He spoke quietly enough, in a slow, clear-cut voice that had in it a vibration of command and perhaps a certain suggestion of cruelty. The other man, standing by the desk with the electric torch in his hand, wheeled suddenly round and stood there with parted lips and terror in those watery brown eyes of his.

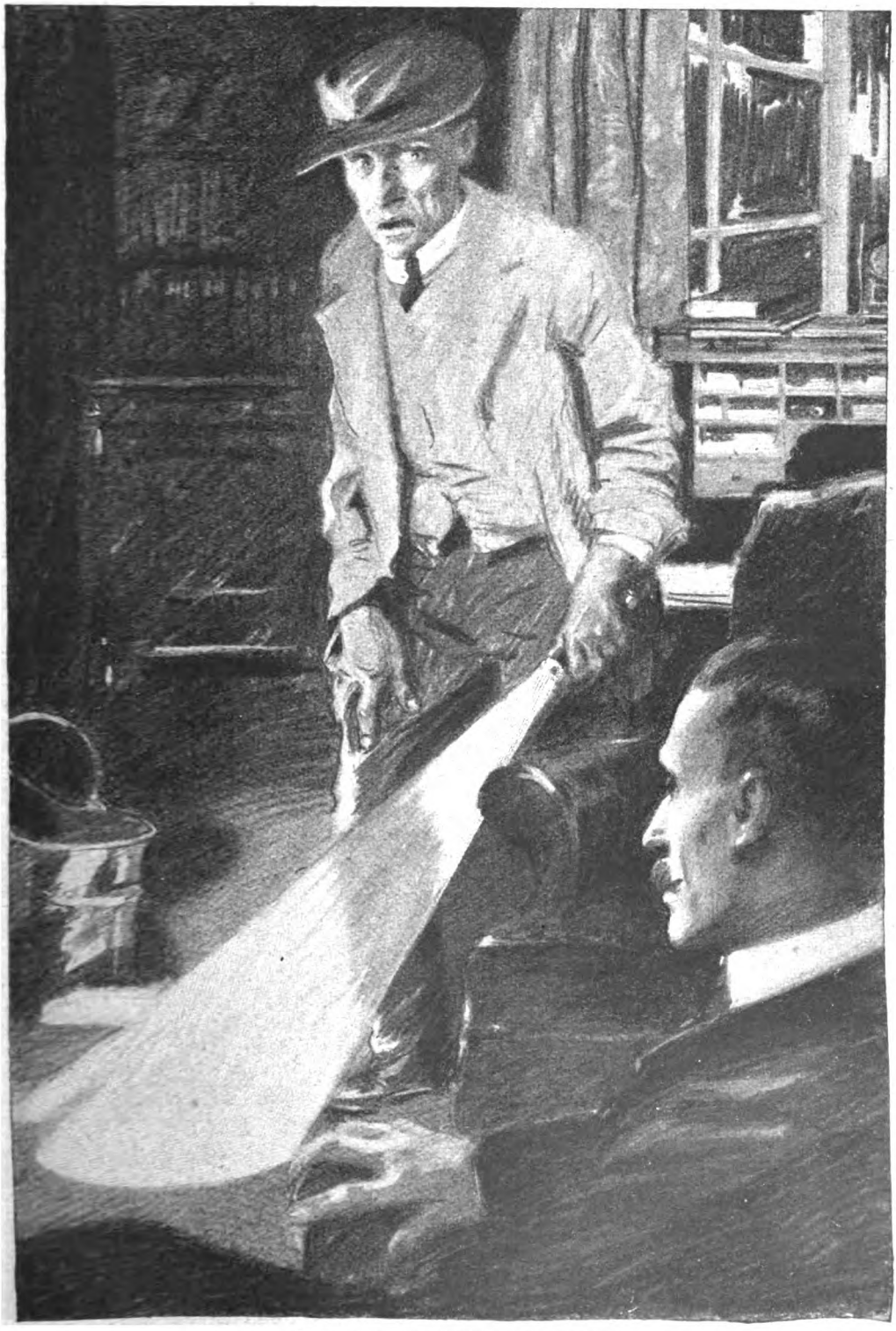
"Roger Broadley!" he gasped.

The words were faint enough, but they carried to the ears of the man sitting in the big arm-chair. He made no sign, the suggestion of a smile was still upon his lips, and those merciless flint-blue eyes of his were turned steadily upon the man with the torch in his hand. The smile was so fixed and the blue eyes so steadfast that the intruder was puzzled to know whether his startled expression had been heard or not. His first impulse was flight by the open window at the back of the desk, or, alternately, through the open door. But the craven fear that had paralyzed the man called Canton all his life held him now, and he cursed himself silently for his want of purpose. He was afraid to turn and fly, afraid of the bullet that might follow him, or the strong, nervous hand that might pluck him back. Very slowly and reluctantly he crossed the room and dropped unsteadily into the chair on the other side of the fireplace. He was still puzzled and dazed, and almost madly anxious to know if the other had recognized him. And there were urgent reasons why he should not be recognized.

But he could see no gleam of remembrance in the concentrated lightning of those flint-blue eyes. And with that Canton began to pull himself together again. With any luck, he might be able to bluff himself out of it yet.

"Fairly got me, haven't you?" he hazarded, with a certain uneasy assumption of ease. "Know me, perhaps?"

He spoke with just the suggestion of a



"'ROGER BROADLEY!' HE GASPED."

lisp, a slight defect due to a missing front tooth. The big man in the opposite arm-chair smiled—smiled in a horribly capable, assured manner that brought the sweat out on Canton's face again. For the other man was so big and strong, so capable and certain of his ground. And those blue eyes burnt and seared like so many live wires in the heart of the craven opposite.

"We won't discuss that for the moment," Broadley said. "And we need not waste time in guessing the reason that brought you here. That torch of yours and the open desk yonder with the gold and notes lying there would be proof, I think, satisfactory to any magistrate of ordinary intelligence. Now, this is the first time I have ever had the pleasure of meeting a gentleman of your profession. Have you been brought up to it, or was it, so to speak, forced upon you?"

Canton almost smiled. Obviously this man, whom he had every cause to fear, had not recognized him. Indeed, why should he? Canton argued, for they had never met face to face, though Canton knew Broadley well enough by reputation. The mean little face, with its narrow, shifty eyes and unsteady lips, grew more resolute, and hope began to bud again.

"Well?" Broadley said. "Well? Of course, you needn't talk unless you like. I suppose you know I am alone in the house. My man is away with the car, at Oxbridge Station, waiting for a friend of mine. So, you see, we are quite alone, and merely man to man. There is nothing to detain you. You can go, if you like. Why don't you?"

Canton snarled bitterly.

"Oh, yes, I know all about that," he said. "You are a bigger man than I am, and you wouldn't talk like that if you weren't armed. Directly I turn my back upon you, I shall get one through the shoulder. You can't fool me!"

"I am not trying," Broadley said, quietly. "I am stating a self-evident fact, if you only knew it. You have me at a great disadvantage."

Canton snarled again; he would have liked to have risen up and struck this sneering antagonist of his between those merciless blue eyes. He would have liked to disfigure that clean-shaven, humorous face, with its faint suggestion of cruelty about the corners of the lips. But he was afraid, and he cursed himself for his fear. He knew himself to be a sneak and a coward, as he had been all his life. He sat there sullenly till Broadley spoke again.

"Very well, then," the latter said. "I have given you every opportunity. I have told you you could go if you like, and that you had me at a great disadvantage. But you are the class of criminal who never knows when he hears the truth; in fact, doesn't understand when he does hear it. You think you are my prisoner. Well, we'll let it go at that. I am quite alone in the house, and feel in the mood for company. Now tell me something about your past life. From your accent, I should judge that at one time you were what is called a gentleman."

The little spurt of hope burnt more clearly in Canton's breast. He was still in deadly fear of the man opposite, afraid of his strength and his coolness; but it might be possible that a plausible tale, well told, would pave the path to freedom. And George Canton was quite good at that sort of thing. It was just the sneaking line of policy that his soul loved.

"You are quite right there," he said. "I was a gentleman at one time. Public school and university; though, if you don't mind, I won't say which."

"Oh, I don't mind in the least," Broadley smiled. "It would probably be a lie, in any case. Go on."

"You may not believe it," Canton said, "but I was brought up for the Church. And at one time I was honestly under the impression that I should make a success of it. But somehow it didn't seem to work, and when I found myself in London at the age of twenty-three with a fair income and quite good prospects, I drifted gradually into evil ways, until nearly everything was gone and I had lost most of my friends."

"And then you married?" Broadley suggested.

"Then—then you know?" Canton gasped.

"My good man, surely that was a reasonable guess. Men of your type always marry. For some occult reason, known only to Providence, the average waster seems always in a position to command the love and affection of some good woman. I have seen it over and over again. And she clings to him till the end, where she would tire of a man worthy of the name. Of course you married. And, of course, you broke the heart of the woman who gave herself to you—though you are going to deny it."

"I didn't," Canton retorted. "I tell you I made a mistake; perhaps we both did, for the matter of that. I had lost nearly all my money, as I told you, and all my friends, and I was beginning to get tired of the life I was leading. It seemed to me that if I could

meet the right woman there was a chance for me yet, because I was still young and I had not done badly at school and Cambridge. And I did meet her; at least, I thought so. To begin with, she knew a good deal about my past, and was quite prepared to overlook it. And, mind you, I had still a few hundreds left. My idea was to go into business and settle down and become a respectable member of society. And I believe I should have done so if my wife had helped me."

"And she didn't?" Broadley asked, mockingly.

"Not after the first few months," Canton went on. "Perhaps it wasn't altogether her own fault. I was too easy with her, too fond of her, and allowed her to have her own way too much. She hadn't the least notion of the value of money, and everything she wanted she just got. We were living in a flat in Bloomsbury, where my family had had a lot of property at one time, so that my credit was good, and my wife could get all she needed. It was the old story: a foolish man over head and ears in love with a silly woman, vain and frivolous, who had only one object in life, and that was to enjoy herself. You can imagine how I suffered with the little money I had going out every day and nothing coming in, because my business efforts were a failure. You see, I wasn't made for business, I wasn't trained for it; and though I tried hard enough, God knows, I lost one situation after another."

Canton paused and sighed eloquently, the easy sigh of a man who has told his tale before and found it good. He reflected that perhaps he might touch the heart of the man opposite to a pitch of something more than freedom. And, above all, he had the feeling that Broadley had not recognized him.

"Go on," Broadley said. "I am always interested in the human document, especially when it has frayed edges."

"Well, the time came at last," Canton proceeded, "when things reached a crisis. I had no money left, and when my pretty doll of a wife discovered that, she threatened to leave me. Just at that time I was in the office of a big firm of jewellers. It was not that I was getting much, but my employer trusted me. More than once he had sent me to a great house in the West-end with gems to deliver on approval. That night I came home with a pearl necklace in my pocket. It should have been delivered that evening at the house of one of our great millionaires, but her ladyship was out of town, or gone to some big function, so I took the case home with me. Would to Heaven I had done nothing of the kind! Would that I had said nothing to my wife about it, for she stole that necklace when I was asleep, and tried to sell it. Of course, she was found out; of course, she was discovered and prosecuted for the theft. I was arrested too, and the people who prosecuted me tried to make out that she was a tool in the matter, and that I had merely used my wife as a shield to hide my own crime."

"And the jury believed it?" Broadley asked, dryly.

"They did, sir; they did," Canton whined. "They said that my wife was absolutely innocent, and that when I sent her with those pearls in her pocket to sell them to a notorious receiver of stolen goods for five hundred pounds I did so because I was too much of a coward to take them myself. I remember that the judge was particularly hard on me."

"I can imagine it," Broadley smiled. "I can imagine him saying that you were a particularly poisonous type of humanity, and a scoundrel of the worst kind who never hesitates to shield himself behind an innocent and injured woman."

"But you don't believe it, sir?" Canton asked, with some anxiety. "You have heard of hard-working men who have been ruined by their wives?"

"Many a time," Broadley said. "And so you are one of that class, are you? Evidently a sad case. But I interrupt you. What was the upshot of the tragedy?"

"I got five years," Canton said. "And they acquitted my wife, the judge saying that he was convinced that she was absolutely innocent. You see, being a pretty woman with friends, she could call all sorts of evidence in her favour, and she did. Why, when the jury acquitted her, there was actually applause in court. Not that I minded; I still loved her far too well to want to see her suffer."

Just for a moment the two steel-blue eyes turned fully on Canton's face blazed, and the strong, capable hands on the elbows of the arm-chair clenched till the knuckles stood out like ivory. Then the humorous mouth smiled again.

"Your sentiments do you credit," Broadley said. "I quite understand, the strong man suffering in silence for the sake of a shallow and frivolous woman. My good sir, the thing has been done in scores of novels and plays, and will go on appealing to the gallery as long as there is a cinema palace left. So you went to jail, and the woman escaped scot-free. And what happened afterwards? Did

you seek her out, did you find her in rags and poverty, and take her back to your broad, manly bosom and wipe her tears away?"

Canton winced, but wisely ignored the sarcasm. He was fighting for his liberty now, and therefore declined to be ruffled by such a little thing as that.

"I did find her, sir," he said. "And she did come back to me for a short time. But I had to leave her; I had to leave her because she was past all endurance. I gave her every penny that I had, and we parted for ever."

"I wonder," Broadley said, softly, "I wonder if, on the face of God's earth, there is a slimier scoundrel than yourself? You did nothing of the kind, Canton."

"CANTON PUT UP HIS HANDS AS IF TO WARD OFF A BLOW."

"Then—then you recognize me!" the other gasped.

"Oh, I recognized you right enough. I knew who you were directly I turned the light on and you uttered my name under your breath. We have never met face to face, but you have seen me and you knew who I was at once. If you had known that this bungalow belonged to me, I hardly think that you would be sitting here to-night. I heard you speak only once when I was in the next room to you on an occasion that you might remember, and that little lisp of yours betrayed you—and the way in which you whispered my name. And, George Canton, you can take it from me that I never forget. When Nature deprives a man of one sense, she generally makes up for it by strengthening another. You rascal, how dare you lie to me!"

Canton put up his hands as if to ward off a blow. He knew that all his efforts were in vain, he knew that he could expect no mercy at the hands of this man. He looked around wildly for some avenue of escape, anywhere to get away from those blazing eyes and that hard face that now was as cruel as the grave. But he could see no sign of an opening anywhere.

"Now, let *me* tell the story," Broadley said, coldly and incisively, in words that seemed to drop like little bits of ice along Canton's spine. "Let us collaborate. You see, I am rather practised at that game, and I think I can add a touch or two of realism to that glib narrative of yours."

"Just as you like, sir," Canton said, fawningly.

"Then, in that case, let us start at the beginning. It is twelve years ago—twelve

years ago to-night, strangely enough—that I became engaged to be married. You know what Agnes Westley was like, so I will not waste time in painting her portrait for you. She was as good as she was beautiful, in every way a perfect woman, and she loved me. My prospects were then perfect, there was no cloud on the horizon anywhere. Really, you had better go before I murder you."

Canton looked hopelessly into the heart of the fire and then round the big room, with its book-shelves and pictures and the glint of china in the cabinets, and his jaw worked convulsively. He burst out suddenly:—

"You are torturing me, you devil!" he said. "You know I cannot get away, you know I am in your power."

"Very well, then," Broadley said, more evenly. "You have had your chance, and when you realize what you have lost and how you have lost it—but never mind that. Let me go on. Where was I? Yes, I was talking of Agnes Westley. I didn't know then that she knew you; I didn't know that you were planning and contriving to come between us until it was too late and I had lost her, owing to those lies of yours and those forgeries that she believed. And for two years I did not know where she was, until she wrote to me for money. She would not have done so but that you forced her, and it was only then that I learnt the story. When I called to see her in London I found her in miserable lodgings, for your money was all gone, and you were in desperate straits to find food for your wife and yourself. You were in bed at the time, you remember, and I heard you speak. I heard those rasping tones of yours with that unmistakable lisp, which I have never forgotten, and which, somehow, I knew I should hear again. And even then, low as you had fallen, and badly as you had behaved, Agnes was doing her best to be a good wife to you. I helped her, as you know, but she would only take sufficient for her bare needs, and I left her, promising to see her again. The next day she was arrested in an attempt to get rid of those pearls which you had stolen. You told me a lie just now when you said you were a trusted servant. You stole those jewels, and, like the coward and cur that you are, you did not dare to take them to your employer who had commissioned you to steal them. You knew that the police were watching you; you deceived your wife, and she fell into the hands of the police. And your defence was that you were a poor and struggling man who had been ruined by an extravagant wife, who took advantage of your love for her to spend all you had. You contemptible scoundrel, you vile and filthy dog! Never was there a man who had a more loyal helpmate, though she had discovered the trick you had played upon her long before. But you were not ashamed to stand up in the dock by her side and tell the judge much what you were telling me just now before you realized that I had recognized you, and when you were hoping to play upon my clemency. But the evidence of the police was too strong for you, and the unhappy woman who stood in the dock with you was acquitted. The police behaved very fairly so far as she was concerned, and she

left the court without a stain on her character. Everybody believed that she was innocent and that she did not know what she was doing when she attempted to get rid of those pearls. And so you got your deserts, and she was free. And, knowing this, you come here to rob me and still further vilify the woman who behaved so loyally to you. In the face of all this you expect me to let you go. But not quite like that, Mr. Canton. I am working out a little revenge of my own, and when you realize how I am bringing it about, then I think I shall be satisfied. Now, have you anything more to say?"

Once more Canton looked round the room, once more he weighed up the chances of a struggle with the man who sat opposite him in the big arm-chair. But it was all useless, all so futile that he resigned himself in a sullen despair. What was the use of speaking, what was to be gained by an appeal to that grim-faced man with the merciless blue eyes who sat in the big chair opposite?

"You say nothing," Broadley went on. "And so I had better finish my story. From time to time I helped Agnes, until you were free, and then I persuaded her to accept a certain sum of money at my hands and go abroad. You came back just about that time and robbed her of every penny she had. You robbed her and left her to starve. And she would have starved but for me; though, mind you, I did not find out this till long afterwards, when she was dying of fever—dying alone and friendless in a little cottage in the country. It is nothing to you that I contracted that fever, and that, in one way, I have never been the same man since."

Canton listened miserably enough, still with a desperate hope that something might happen in his favour, until presently he could hear the sound of wheels in the distance, and a car pulled up in front of the bungalow. Then there were voices in the hall, and a moment or two later the door of the library opened and a man in the uniform of a chauffeur came in.

"Ah, here you are, Rufford," Broadley cried. "Did I hear Mr. Stern's voice?"

"Yes, sir," the man called Rufford said. "He has gone up to his bedroom to wash his hands. I told him as I was looking after you, and that supper would be ready in the dining-room directly he came down. But I beg your pardon, sir."

"Oh, don't go away," Broadley went on. "You are not intruding, Rufford. In fact, if you are quite ready, I want you to look after this visitor of mine. He is quite an involuntary guest, a kind of Autolycus—that is, Rufford, what you call a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. In other words, a burglar, who found his way in through the window under the mistaken impression that the house was empty. We have been having quite an interesting chat, Rufford, and I find that the gentleman is an old acquaintance of mine."

"That's very clever of you, sir," Rufford said. "You have had a narrow escape, I think."

Canton listened dully. It struck him that Rufford's words concealed a certain cruel irony.

"Well, perhaps I have, Rufford," Broadley said. "But, then, appearances are deceptive, and our friend here, fortunately, does not know as much as you and I. You had better take this fellow and tie him up and lock him in the larder. I believe there are iron bars to the window. Then you can telephone for the police, and keep an eye on the fellow till they come. And if he slips through your fingers, Rufford, I shall be exceedingly annoyed. I am not a vindictive man, as you know, but I have peculiar reasons so far as this scamp is concerned."

"I think you can rely upon me, sir," Rufford said.

"I think I can. Is that Mr. Stern calling? All right, Walter, I am coming. Go into the dining-room and wait for me, and we'll have some supper. I think that's all, Rufford."

"Very good, sir," Rufford replied.

Broadley rose quietly from his chair and crossed the room slowly and deliberately, touching the back of a chair here and there until he felt his way out into the hall. It was all done so quietly and withal so cautiously that Canton for the moment hardly understood. Then understanding came to him as he turned with a sudden savage energy to the imperturbable Rufford.

"What—what's the matter with him?" he asked.

"Didn't you know?" Rufford replied. "He has been like that ever since an attack of scarlet fever years ago. My master is *stone-blind*."

Zinklefoot's Find.

By JAMES FRANCIS DWYER.

Illustrated by Frank Wright.

MORE than ten thousand men, whose lives lost their savour through the attainment of something which they had pursued for years, have pointed out that the joy of pursuit is a thousand times greater than that of possession. Preacher Zinklefoot recognized this when a black head rose from the mosaic of white faces in response to his call of "Henry Hutton." Zinklefoot suddenly discovered that he didn't want Hutton—he only wanted to look for him.

His hunt for Hutton had commenced in a peculiar manner. Five years before, while addressing a revivalist meeting at Decatur, Tennessee, a white-haired woman had asked the preacher to call the name of her wandering son at every meeting he addressed. Zinklefoot promised. Quite unconsciously the woman had provided him with a trump act for his oratorical turn.

For the first few weeks after the duty had been put upon him, he told the story in as few words as possible, and called the name of the prodigal in a matter-of-fact way. Then the dramatic possibilities of the incident stirred him. He realized that he had a gem in his repertoire. He put in subtle touches. He braced the story with little pillars of pathos. With vivid oratorical flashes he pictured the waiting mother, and flung upon the minds of his audiences a picture of the storm-tossed prodigal for whose return she waited. It was a unique turn. The telling of the incident, and the solemn calling of the name, tore the crust off the little pools of sentiment in the hearts of his male listeners, and threw the women into hysterics. It was a grand climax to his orations. It left the crowds gasping, weeping, praying, and feeling well disposed towards Zinklefoot, the unpaid scout of the white-haired mother of Decatur.

And after five years of uninterrupted possession of this act that he had adapted and brought to perfection, the preacher saw it suddenly torn away from him, and the nightly kudos lost for ever. No wonder that the uprising of the black head chilled him. A hate for the stranger surged up within him. Instinctively he knew that here was the long-lost Hutton, and he also knew that the white-haired-mother story was gone for ever.

The black-headed man appeared at Weehawpville. Zinklefoot was winding up a successful meeting, and it was the moment for the "Henry Hutton" act. He advanced to the edge of the platform and waited till the smallest whispers had been choked by the silence.

"Friends," he cried, "some years ago when speaking at Decatur, Tennessee, a white-haired mother asked me to call the name of her wandering son at every meeting I addressed. She, poor woman, filled with maternal love — hungry motherly love— stored and gathered through the years, ready to be lavished upon the prodigal, thought that he might be guided to one of my meetings to hear her message. I promised her, and I have kept my promise. Night after night, year after year, over the broad breast of the Union I have called his name, listening, waiting, hoping always to hear the answering voice that will bring joy to the heart of the little white-haired woman in far-off Tennessee."

The sound of suppressed sobs came from the audience, and Zinklefoot swept up the dizzy heights of oratory that he had built up before reaching the climax. The mother at Decatur shone out like a snowy-headed angel, and tears dropped upon the green grass as he thrilled his hearers with the story of her love and devotion. At last he straightened himself and called the name of the prodigal.

"Henry Hutton!" The call went ringing

through the right, and the listeners held their breath. "Henry Hutton! Henry——"

Zinklefoot's voice seemed to fall into a bottomless chasm as a black head rose in the centre of the crowd. The head had the same effect upon him as a blow from a clenched fist, and he staggered.

"I'm Henry Hutton of Decatur," said the man, standing.

"'I'M HENRY HUTTON,' SAID THE MAN, STANDING."

Weehawpville will not forget the scene that followed. The discovery of the prodigal was intensely dramatic, and, as the inhabitants of the town had few opportunities for letting themselves go, they seized upon the one made by Zinklefoot. Men struggled to get near the wanderer; women wept hysterically. Hutton was carried shoulder-high to the platform, and the preacher's commands for silence were lost in cheers and sobs. Women sobbed, men sobbed, and the prodigal sobbed. Only Zinklefoot was calm, but Zinklefoot's endeavours to calm the others were unheeded. He had stirred a monster tidal wave of sentiment that billowed around Hutton and left Zinklefoot stranded on the cold stones of neglect. Instead of being the leading actor he dropped back into the shade and stood there without a part.

The genius who always discovers the psychological moment, discovered it at that instant in the interest of Henry Hutton. He may have been a friend of the prodigal, for Weehawpville was unsuccessful in locating him amongst its citizens on the following day, but over the tumult the genius announced that the wanderer would go back to the white-haired mother in Decatur at once if he had the money for his fare.

Weehawpville shouted the information, and then proceeded to demolish the little barrier that stood between the reunion of the white-haired mother and the long-lost son. Weehawpville was in a generous mood. Weehawpville had been tapped on its deepest vein of sentiment, and with cheers and sobs they proved that the ore was good. When silence was at last restored the wanderer was stammering his thanks for the eighty-three dollars that had been stuffed into the pockets of his ragged clothes. Then Weehawpville sobbed again, and after carrying the stranger to an hotel the inhabitants went home, still sobbing as their imaginations pictured the meeting in far-off Tennessee.

At daybreak next morning Preacher Zinklefoot startled the lodgers at the hotel by banging heavily at the front entrance, and when the annoyed landlord admitted him he yelled loudly for the prodigal.

"Left by the three o'clock train," snapped the proprietor. "So anxious to see his old woman again."

Zinklefoot clung to the door. "Read—read that," he gasped.

The landlord took the sheet of yellow paper and read aloud:—

"ZINKLEFOOT, WEEHAWPVILLE.

"Henry Hutton returned two years ago. Mother dead nine months. Your man evidently a fraud.

"CHIEF OF POLICE, Decatur."

The landlord stared at the distressed preacher. "If I was you," he said, solemnly, "I wouldn't show that to the crowd. They'll lynch you for putting the bait on the hook so that that swindler could do them."

But Zinklefoot didn't hear the advice. He had fainted.

How to Play the Piano—
AND HOW NOT TO.

Some Common Mistakes and Some Advice.

By MARK HAMBOURG.

Photo.] [*Dover St. Studios.*

WHEN a student comes to play to the artist with whom he desires to study, how often does he ask, when he has finished his performance: "Master, what I really want you to tell me is, whether I have any very serious faults in my playing?"

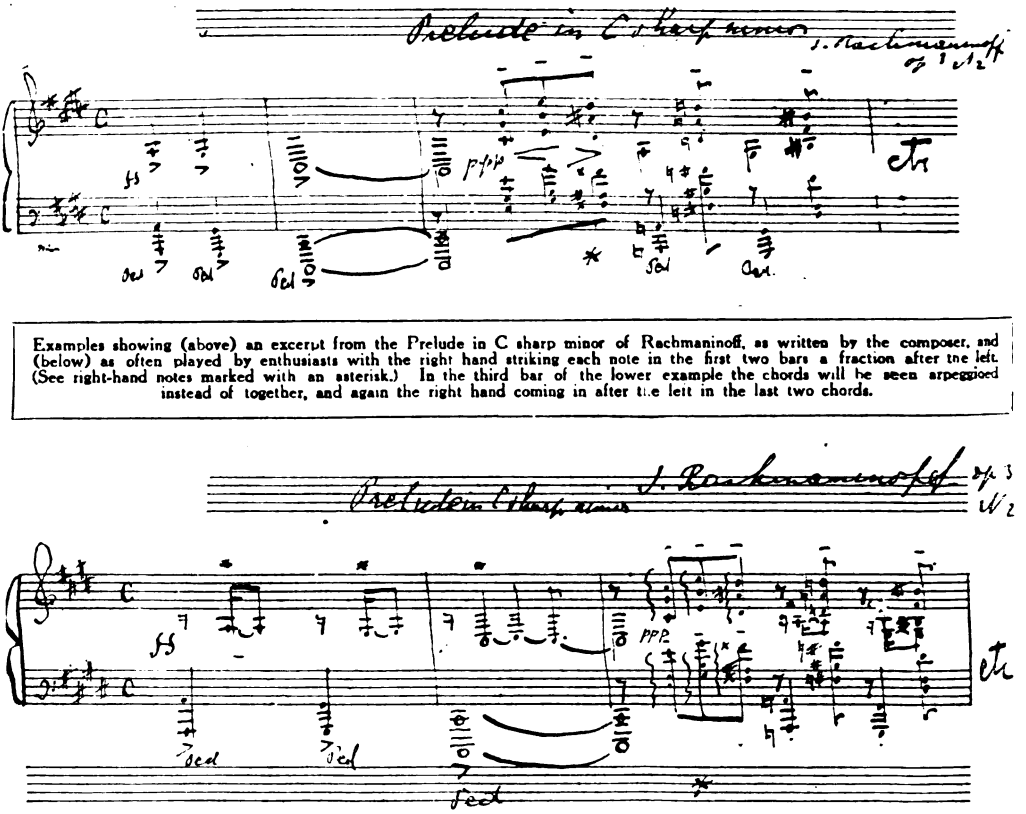
Serious faults in his playing! Poor fellow! He probably has several which he has not yet discovered himself, and which most likely no one has ever drawn his attention to.

What, then, are some of the most common faults, and at the same time some of the worst of those which students of the piano may fall into unsuspectingly through careless tuition? Well, these are many and various, and are generally very difficult to eradicate. Moreover, they beset the most talented players, just as much as their less gifted brethren.

To begin with, there is no more usual failing, or one more damaging to good piano-playing, than too much use of the pedal, and its application in the wrong places. The pedal is really a very dangerous attraction to the inexperienced and yet enthusiastic performer. It is such an alluring temptation to hear the notes welling into one another, also the blur of sound produced by much pedalling covers up so many deficiencies of execution. There is no doubt that the pedal carries with it a sort of special glamour of its own, so that even children when they first start learning the piano are always clamouring to be allowed to play with the pedal. It is their greatest ambition. Yet bad use of the pedal is quite capable of completely marring the effect of what might otherwise be a fine rendering of a piece of music. The pedal should be used to enhance,

but never to cover up, and should be regarded as a means for producing certain definite tone-effects and variations of tone-colour at precise moments, and not as a sort of general mist of hot vapour or steam by which each note, passage, and chord becomes enveloped.

Misuse of the pedal is a horrible fault, and can affect great and small alike; it should be carefully guarded against. Indeed, of simultaneousness of sound the whole grandeur after which the performer is striving will be dispelled, in the irritating effect of one part of the harmony always reaching the ear at a slight interval after the other. This is a most frequent failing amongst very musical people who enjoy tremendously what they are playing; and especially does it occur with them in slow movements, when they will arpeggio the chords between the



Examples showing (above) an excerpt from the Prelude in C sharp minor of Rachmaninoff, as written by the composer, and (below) as often played by enthusiasts with the right hand striking each note in the first two bars a fraction after the left. (See right-hand notes marked with an asterisk.) In the third bar of the lower example the chords will be seen arpeggioed instead of together, and again the right hand coming in after the left in the last two chords.

the state it produces on the mind of the listener is similar to that which overheated air creates in the lungs—namely, fatigue, nausea, lassitude, and even, alas, drowsiness!

Now comes along the temperamental student, burning with ardour for the beauty of the music, longing to make the noble chords of some fine melody speak out its message! What special pitfall lies ready to entrap his zealous endeavours? Why, in his enthusiasm that the melody in both hands should be properly brought out, he gets one hand playing after the other! Only a fraction of a second after the left hand does the right hand strike, but in that loss two hands so much that it sounds to me like drawling in speech, or even like stuttering. These enthusiasts lose their sense of the symmetry of the sound in their intense pleasure over its component parts, and it is hard that the very virtue that lies in their love of the music can thus lead them into danger.

Dragging the time, another tiresome error of judgment, proceeds generally from the same cause of over-fervour. The player who suffers from this blemish mostly owes it to a lack of sense of proportion and taste, and to a certain want of artistic perception of the guiding line between true sentiment and sentimentality.

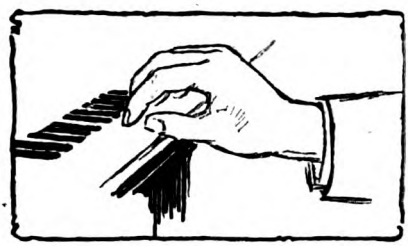


FIG. 1. — CORRECT POSITION OF THE THUMB ON THE KEYBOARD.

Hurrying the tempo is nearly as bad, and is sometimes caused by nervousness, though indifference, want of confidence, and the very general mistake of looking upon a crescendo as an accellerando, also give rise to it. People who are inclined to be nervous when playing before others often get a queer kind of defiant sensation when technically difficult passages hover in sight; the "let's get it over and be done with it" sort of feeling, which makes them hurry in an extraordinary manner. Of course, hurrying may just as well arise from a lack of instinct for rhythm in the student. Where this is the case, it is rather a hopeless look-out, as it is so hard to inculcate a real feeling for rhythm into someone who is not naturally endowed with it. But it has often been my experience to listen to students who were gifted with a most highly-developed sense of rhythm, and yet who hurried, especially over their technically difficult passages, until I began to get positively breathless. This kind of increasing the speed was, of course, due to want of nervous control.

As hurrying and also dragging the tempi are both errors connected somewhat with *faulty Rhythm*, I will speak of this next as a highly unsatisfactory failing. Rhythm is no doubt to a great extent instinctive, and is bound up a good deal with individual temperaments. But it must be carefully developed by teaching and analysis, for too much emphasis can never be bestowed upon giving every note in music its proper value, apart from any other rhythmical consideration. For rhythm in piano-playing is so essential a factor in obtaining a good tone-production, that it is imperative to cultivate it with great attention to correctness of outline. Lack of rhythm, or faulty rhythm, will take all character from a musical performance, and will leave an impression of insipidity and monotony where there is no rhythm, and of irritation where the rhythm is inexact, as the case may be.

Close on the heels of bad rhythm comes the weakness of *always using the same kind of tone* while performing. Plenty of variation of tone-colour is absolutely necessary to inspired and interesting playing on the piano, as, indeed, on all instruments.

On the piano it is more difficult to arrive at than on the stringed or even the wind instruments, and needs much study of the technic of touch. For frequently we cannot understand, after coming out from a concert, why what we appreciated as a really fine performance of a musical work had not arrested our attention more, or aroused keener pleasure. A certain sense of monotony or dullness had crept over us while listening. Such a feeling, or rather want of feeling, is almost always the result of the performer's failure to grasp the possibilities of his instrument in relation to tone-colour. Everything he plays is in a similar hue of tone, therefore a sameness and lack of life and contrast pervades the whole. It is a strange anomaly that the more beautiful is the touch of the pianist by natural instinct, the more is he apt to fall into the fault of using it indiscriminately in the same strength, because he takes so much personal pride and pleasure in it. It is like the case of singers who are gifted with wonderful top notes, and, therefore, are always inclined to warble them forth in full but monotonous volumes of sound.

FIG. 2.—THE CORRECT POSITION AT THE PIANO.

There are other serious faults which hamper pianists, pertaining more to purely technical matters. Such is, for instance, *sticking out the thumb*, instead of always keeping it ready underneath the palm of the hand in order to facilitate its rapid passage during the changes of position on the keyboard. This is an important affair, as if this sticking out of the thumb is not checked, it will impede the technical perfection of passage-playing and cause it to be awkward, heavy, and laboured (Fig. 1).

Keeping the elbows out is a trick that many fall into, which is both unsightly and detrimental to tone-production, because it forces the hand into unnatural positions, and stiffens the wrists, as well as impairs rapidity and suppleness of execution. The ideal position which must be acquired at the outset of learning to play is to sit at a medium distance from the instrument, with the chair placed exactly in front of the middle of the keyboard. The hands should be arched into a kind of cup-like shape, with the knuckles protruding, the wrists held slightly below the keys, and the elbows kept close in to the body, as shown in the diagram (Fig. 2).

Any deviation from the above position, which is the easy and natural one at the instrument, is bound to be injurious to playing.

Excessive movement of the body, too, while playing, is disturbing to the sight, and to the player's power of elasticity, yet it is a bad habit which is much indulged in. No doubt it seems to help people to intensify what they are feeling, but this is an illusion. Exaggerated gesture, on the contrary, tends rather to diminish an impression which might otherwise be deep, and weakens it, by a suggestion of hysteria, while too frequently it borders on the ridiculous, in which case the impression is altogether lost. Movements of the body while playing can be divided into two classes—namely, jerky movements (generally confined to the head and shoulders), which produce stiffness and tension, and swaying movements of the whole frame, which disturb the rhythm.

Some players pick up the peculiarity of *making extraordinary faces* during their performance of music. This is a very absurd fault, but it too often becomes a habit that is terribly hard to get rid of, because it is done quite unconsciously as a rule, and is also instigated by a desire to express the maximum of emotion, and sometimes provoked by the physical exertion necessary for the performance of a technical feat. The only remedy for "making faces" is to have a mirror hung in front of the culprit whenever he is practising.

And how about the student who loves his right hand better than his left? He seems to follow the Bible maxim of not letting his right hand know what his left hand is doing, chiefly because his left hand is not doing much at all! By this I mean that it is bad to *neglect the left hand*, which is generally the weaker member anyhow, and not to allow it to develop its bass parts and fundamental notes with just as much significance and sonority as the more obvious work of the right hand. Of course, the left hand should never be permitted to drown the right hand, but it should sustain and harmoniously support it. Want of proper consideration and indifference to the bass writing of a piece is a most unmusical mistake, as it destroys the structure of the whole work. Still, it is one of the most everyday failings amongst students.

Young players also err very often by *incorrect style* in their performance of different kinds of music. Bach cannot be played with the highly-coloured romantic passion which should pervade renderings of Schumann or Tschaikovsky, nor with the weird ethereal atmosphere that surrounds the music of the modern French school. Music approached thus in a totally false appreciation of its spirit becomes merely caricature. Yet I have had Chopin played to me with all the dryness and precision of the most pedantic classical manner, and Bach distorted with rubato and unnatural limelight effects.

It is perhaps disheartening to think that there are so many pitfalls lurking for the pianist in every direction, but there remains always this consoling reflection, that the man of real genius, even when he suffers from every one of the faults mentioned here, will not thereby be prevented from still being a great player. These deficiencies of detail are only grave hindrances to the commonplace ability which has no divine fire to sustain it. And when all is said and done, each individual possesses the right to hope that the spark of genius which palliates so many evils may lie in him too, if only it can be discovered. I well remember Leschetitzky, the greatest of pianoforte teachers, finishing up his lessons to his dejected pupils, after telling them in his most forceful manner of all their heinous faults, with the following exhortation: "I would say nothing, gentlemen, of the manner in which you play, if only the result was a satisfying one. You may play with your feet upon the keyboard if only it sounds well, but remember they must be talented feet."

The Temporary Heir.

By JOHN FLEMING WILSON.

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

A COMPLETE RÉSUMÉ OF THE FIRST HALF OF THIS STORY.

Captain Ezra Ames dies in his cabin on a lonely South Sea island where he has been pearl-fishing. With him is Hendricks, a young American sailor. On the shore and on his schooner in the harbour are Wilks, an old sea-captain whose wife "Killer" Ames has stolen and whose spirit the dominating Ames has crushed; Peterson, who has been Ames' lieutenant; and a crew of Kanakas. Before he dies, Ames gives to Hendricks a bag of pearls and the address of a girl in San Francisco and asks him to take her the legacy. Hendricks agrees, and feels he must carry out his promise even when he finds the pearls have lost their lustre—that is, are "dead." Hendricks does not tell the other white men, who are drunk, of "Killer" Ames's death; instead he informs them that Ames has ordered them to sail for Honolulu next day. During the night Hendricks smuggles Ames's body aboard. And with the tide the schooner departs for Honolulu. The alcohol in Wilks's brain inflames his old passion for revenge; sneaking to Ames's cabin, he drives a knife into "Killer's" body and believes he has caused his death. Later he kills Peterson and (Hendricks humouring him) assumes command of the ship—old Captain Wilks, freed from domination, has become a man once more! The schooner reaches Honolulu; and Wilks, thirsting to rehabilitate his reputation as a man among the men of the South Seas, abandons the schooner to Hendricks and goes ashore, where in various drinking dens he arouses suspicion by reporting: "Well, well! Ames is dead and gone, but look who's here—Captain Billy Wilks." Hendricks arrives in San Francisco—where the port officials, having heard by cable that Wilks has babbled of Ames's murder, confine Hendricks aboard his ship pending an investigation. Hendricks escapes, and with the pearls in his belt goes to find Susan Mathews, legatee of "Killer" Ames.

PART II.

HENDRICKS went up the broad low steps to the great bronze doors with an awkwardness due to long habit in leaping up ships' ladders with their steep treads. When the door opened he inquired of a staid man-servant if Miss Mathews was at home.

The man nodded slightly, but said nothing. Hendricks found himself surprised that he had the right address. But he recovered quickly and said: "Will you tell her it's Captain Hendricks calling? From Captain Ames, please."

Hendricks entered and was ushered promptly into a little room off the reception-hall. It was bare and evidently a place of business. He began to feel that very likely his errand was to be purely a cold, matter-of-fact transaction without a tinge of romance to it. Then the heavy curtain across the doorway was lifted quickly, and he was face to face with a young woman who was saying, "Is this the gentleman from Captain Ames?" in a low tone.

"I'm Captain Hendricks," he answered. "Captain Ames asked me to call."

"Yes?" she suggested.

He looked at her and flushed. She was a tall, well-made girl, dressed in a style that set off to advantage a fine figure and carriage; she was extremely handsome, with an expressive and whimsical mouth. But her eyes were as chill as a mountain lake.

To Hendricks it seemed as if everything he had experienced in his life of many vicissitudes was commonplace beside meeting such a woman; he had not known that the world he had left so many years ago held such distinctive and splendid figures. He felt out of his element and shy, but came straight to the point.

"Ames didn't have much time to explain matters to me," he said, staring at his own rough hands. "He died very suddenly."

In the stillness he slowly raised his eyes, wondering why she did not speak. He saw her face, and its expression baffled him. Was it possible that she did not understand? Of course, such as she would care little for a rough customer like Ames; but surely she would be surprised—disappointed, maybe. And what *was* that strange look on her face?

Presently she rose, turned away, and went to the window. She stood there in immobility, without speaking. Hendricks began to fear that he had really hurt her; it might be that she liked Ames—or was a relative.

"He never spoke of you," she said, at last.

"Quite likely," he admitted, much relieved that she wasn't offended at him. "We weren't intimate. But when he died I was with him, and I couldn't do much less than listen to his last wishes, could I? There was no one else."

"Then he sent a message?"

"No. He died suddenly, unexpectedly to himself, I think, Miss Mathews. By chance I was with him when he was taken ill. He realized that he was dying, and merely asked

me to bring his vessel and other things to San Francisco to you."

She turned her face to him, and he perceived that she was very calm. "The schooner, you say? What else?"

Hendricks slipped one hand into a side pocket and drew out the cigarette-case. "They are in this," he said, offering it.

She glanced at the tarnished silver and then met Hendricks's eyes. "And he—he told you nothing about me?"

"He never mentioned your name in the two years that I knew him," he replied.

"He died at sea?"

"On shore, on an island in the Stranger group."

"Where were the rest?" she demanded. "Weren't they there too?"

"The others?" he said, blankly. "Only a couple of white men—Wilks and Peterson."

She shook her head slightly. "They—they knew he died?" Before he could answer, she had taken the case; he saw her slender fingers tremble over it. Then she looked up at him, and he saw growing distress in her eyes that had been so cold. He was embarrassed, but stammered a reply.

"They—they didn't know," he said.

Now she was facing him with an intense expression of pain on her face, mingled with one of dread. "Are you sure—are you certain—that he is—not alive—still?"

Hendricks suddenly was aware that she cared terribly. After all, she hoped! He perceived the tragedy of it all, and bowed his head. "I was with him when he died," he responded, in a low tone. "I believe that is all. The schooner is over at quarantine and, from what I understand, there is some irregularity in the papers, something done against port regulations. I thought best to leave secretly and come to you immediately. I thought possibly you might not—possibly you wouldn't care to be mixed up—in an irregular affair."

"What was it?" she asked quickly.

"I'm not sure. From what was hinted, I think Wilks—an old fellow who didn't like Captain Ames—spread some foolish report in Honolulu."

"About my husband?"

"Your husband?" he repeated, in a puzzled tone.

"Captain Ames," she answered.

He forced himself to look at her still face. He was bitterly disappointed—just why he did not know. So this was the mystery in the life of Killer Ames! His wife! For the first time he understood a little of the enormous growth which springs from the root of a single tragedy. Why hadn't someone killed Ames before he had accomplished the vilest act of his despicable existence? It was incredible that he should have been suffered to crown his bestial villainy by winning the heart of the splendid girl who now stood silent and tearless in this little bare room on Steiner Street.

"If I had known," he muttered, "or suspected——"

"IN THE STILLNESS HE SLOWLY RAISED HIS EYES, WONDERING BAFFLED

She nodded slightly; then, as if to spare him further pain at his blunt breaking of such news, she murmured: "I got a divorce long ago. Our marriage was a mistake." She paused a moment and then continued: "He never mentioned me?"

"Never. Even at the last he said no name—merely told me I should find an address in the log-book."

She sighed. "It was like him. If he had set his mind on a thing being so, he never admitted that it was not so, even to himself. It was like him to write down the address of the one woman who—who hated him, and let the world think she loved him."

Hendricks drew a long breath. "*I* hated him," he said, quietly.

"Exactly. And yet he knew you would come all these thousands of miles on a useless errand, just as if you were his warmest friend and would do anything for him. You obeyed him, even against your will!"

"I suppose so," Hendricks replied, hesitatingly. "Ames was a man used to having what he wanted. But in this case I merely did the decent thing, nothing more."

"I'm glad he sent you and not—one of his friends," she said, simply.

They stood in silence, sharing an intimacy for a moment, neither one free to say more than had been said. Mrs. Ames (or Miss Mathews) presently opened the cigarette-case, without haste. As she looked at its contents, Hendricks was amazed to see her fine eyes grow misty—two tears flow down her cheeks.

"Ah!" she breathed. "Pearls! And like everything else he ever won, they died in his possession. It was his fate, wasn't it?—to kill what he loved."

"I don't think he knew they were—spoiled," he ventured, gently.

She looked at him through suffused eyes. "How could he help knowing? Yet—it is like him, to send them as if they were precious. It is his message to me."

She cried softly a little, while Hendricks stared into vacancy, unwillingly seeing again the austere figure of Killer Ames, dying in a rough shanty on a desert isle, sending dead pearls

WHY SHE DID NOT SPEAK. HE SAW HER FACE, AND ITS EXPRESSION HIM."

as a last legacy to the woman he loved. A message? Possibly she was right, and Ames had spoken no word of farewell at the end of his lawless life, but had, stubbornly silent, still seen to it that she received the sum of his rapine and robbery—lustreless, valueless nacre.

There was nothing to say under such circumstances. His errand was done. He stepped back and laid one hand on the curtain. Mrs. Ames looked at him for a moment, and her stormy eyes bade him farewell. Feeling that every second that he remained put him more firmly in the position of the bearer of a taunt and an insult, he passed out.

The cabman drew the blanket off his horse and whispered, huskily. "Where now, sir? Downtown?"

Hendricks glanced down at the bay below the hill, glimmering in the last rays of the setting sun. He was a stranger, with no place to go.

"The ferry," he said, at a venture.

Back amid the throng of home-going folks, he realized that very likely he was in quest by the authorities for his lawless evasion from the schooner, and passed through the first gate, buying a ticket without asking whither it would take him. He found himself on the Sausalito boat. As good as any!

That night George Hendricks signed his full name for the first time in two years—twice. When he had registered and been shown to a room high up in the rambling hotel on the hill above the bay, he opened the worn leather belt and extracted the old draft for two thousand dollars, which had been given him as payment for a cargo of curios landed in Sydney, and endorsed it. As he did so, it occurred to him again that Killer Ames must have been struck with some qualms over the fashion in which he had obtained the money, and put the paper aside for further consideration.

"At any rate," he thought, "I'm not broke. Gottal will cash it for me." He recalled the alert, nervous figure of the ship-broker who had financed his early voyages. Gottal was a good sort—a crank on queer curios, a little prone to preening himself over his connoisseurship, but a readily kind man and understanding the oddities of human nature almost as well as he did the queer things in which he dealt. He had picked up Hendricks in a pawnshop, where the bargain was over a sextant. Their conversation had been brief and to the point.

"I beg pardon," Gottal had said, after a moment's impatient listening to the pawnbroker's eulogy of the battered instrument; "I have a better sextant at my office, Captain."

Hendricks remembered distinctly the respectful way in which the man behind the counter had nodded and withdrawn the offered article with an apologetic smile. "Ah, Mr. Gottal!" he had said, shaking his head, "you have spoiled a bargain for this young man."

"Nonsense!" Gottal had answered, curtly. "He knows better than to take that thing. Come on, Captain; we'll go to my office." Then he had turned to the broker with a brief, "Keep your eyes open for what I asked you for, Levi," and led the way out on Kearney Street.

"My place is on Commercial," he had said, and they walked silently down to a small dusty office on that street.

"Here's the sextant, Captain," the ship-broker had said, handing down a case.

"Brand new," Hendricks had commented.

"Sure. What ship have you?"

"None. Going as mate of the *Mercy Fellows*."

"Nonsense! Go skipper of the *Bertie Minor*, my schooner—Papua."

"Rum folks, the Papuans," Hendricks had remarked.

"You'll go?"

"Sure," said Hendricks.

He had made three voyages in the vessel. A nice packet she was, too! he thought. And he had left her only when Gottal had announced that he had sold her, with the dry remark: "She's getting too well known in the South Seas. I'll pick up an Eastern craft pretty soon, Hendricks. Wait a month or two."

The event was that Hendricks had grown weary of waiting and shipped West on a steamer after a farewell call on Gottal, who had shaken his head and snapped: "All right: You'll be around this way some time. I'll have something for you."

So now Hendricks said to himself that he must see Gottal and ask for the "something" promised so long ago. He could explain to the broker a good many things about Killer Ames which few others would understand. Also Gottal would square matters with the authorities.

At this point Hendricks's thoughts travelled back over the afternoon's events. He saw himself entering the big mansion on the hill and asking for Miss Mathews. He felt again the thrill he had experienced when she had appeared, so beautiful and so cold, so exquisite and so fine. Then there was his own blunder in telling outright of Ames's death and his subsequent amazement at finding he was speaking to the Killer's wife. Well, who could have suspected it? A big house, servants at the door—no one would have dreamed of finding Ames's wife in such surroundings.

Suddenly Hendricks went to the window of his little room and stared out on the bay, starred with scattered lights. A new thought had struck him. One certainly did grow ignorant down under the Equator! He had naturally taken it for granted that Miss Mathews was the mistress of the Steiner Street house. Why? Merely because she had looked it. But she could not have been, especially in view of the fact that she had received him in what was evidently a bare business office. She was a maid, a servant. And this explained a tremendous amount—her quietness, her restrained manner, her apparent dread of becoming excited by his news. She was a servant, afraid of disturbing her mistress or intruding her own affairs into a household which knew her impersonally.

This settled to his satisfaction, he decided that he hadn't done all that was necessary.

Very possibly Mrs. Ames had no male relatives at hand. She was undoubtedly without money, except what she earned in her menial capacity. Ames was a brute, anyway, sending worthless pearls to a wife who had had to go to work to support herself. No wonder she had shown dread at the thought of not having even an absent husband from whom to hope for help.

At first he decided to write Miss Mathews a letter, assuring her of his intent to help her. Then this seemed a poor way to do the thing; anyway, how was he to get an answer? With the police hunting for him, as he had little doubt they were, he must be on the move. Why not go and see her again?

He was up and on his return to San Francisco by breakfast-time. He had mentally arranged the day's programme and doggedly started out as he had planned. His first call was on Gottal, for whom he had to wait an hour. The broker shook hands without expressing surprise and led the way into a small inner room.

"I take it you are the chap who killed Captain Ames," Gottal said, briefly.

"No such luck," Hendricks returned, handing over the draft. "I brought his old packet up to the coast after he died down on one of the Strangers."

"This draft is more'n two years old," the broker continued, examining the paper.

"Sure. I didn't have any need for the coin."

"Lucky man. I suppose you want me to cash it for you, when the police are looking for you?"

"Yes," Hendricks replied. "Let 'em look. *I* didn't kill Ames."

"Who did?"

"Nobody. He was struck with paralysis. Died in an hour."

Gottal frowned. "But you skipped away from the *Empress* without waiting for leave."

"Of course I did," Hendricks responded. "The fools! Everybody knows what an ass old Wilks is. When I heard that he was yarning down in Honolulu, I saw that there was no use arguing the matter. I had business ashore and I *came* ashore."

"Exactly," the broker assented. "And now they think you're the murderer. It's jail for you if they catch you."

"No chance," Hendricks boasted. "Just let me have that cash and settle up a little affair here and I'm off again. They'll find out quick enough that Papa Wilks was drunk and didn't know what he was talking about."

Gottal refused to lose his serious demeanour. "You are in great danger of your neck, my dear sir," he expostulated. "I'll give you the money and carry the draft till some English advices come in and cash it with them, as if I had got it from London. But—may I ask what this 'little affair' is?"

"About Ames's wife," Hendricks returned.

"Ahem! I didn't know he had one."

"It seems he did. And she's helpless, and I'm going to help her get her rights. I don't know that there's much for her in the whole outfit, from what I've seen of it. But she's entitled to what there is."

"Have you known her long?" inquired the broker, darting his eyes at everything on his desk as if in quest of a morsel of common sense to be instantly offered his visitor.

"Never knew there was a Mrs. Ames till yesterday." Hendricks briefly explained the events which had led to his being almost thrust into the position of executor of the Killer's last will and testament. "So," he concluded, "I looked up the address in the old man's log-book and went ashore during the night and next day called on Susan Mathews."

Gottal stiffened in his chair. "What name?"

"Susan Mathews," Hendricks repeated. "At 4847, Steiner Street."

"You're crazy, Captain," the broker announced, dogmatically. "Do you know who Miss Susan Mathews is?"

"I do," was the curt reply. "It's nothing against her that she married Ames. In fact, she got a divorce. And because she works for her living up in that big house merely means that she's too proud to live off that brute's money—if he has any, which I doubt!"

Gottal laughed queerly, stared at his caller a moment, and then pushed the button for a clerk, who poked his head in questioningly.

"Maury, go to the bank and get me two thousand dollars in gold, small gold," came the command. When the clerk had vanished, Gottal swung on Hendricks. "I've got a schooner loaded for Midway Island, Captain. You can have her, if you'll sail to-night."

"Thanks!" Hendricks replied, stiffly. "I may take you up this afternoon."

"Why not this morning?"

"I've got to go up and see Miss—Mrs. Ames again, on Steiner Street."

"She—she told you she was a maid there?" Gottal asked, quietly.

"No. But she must be, from all that I saw. Naturally, she isn't boasting of having been Ames's wife. She goes by the name of Miss Susan Mathews."

"She does, does she? Well, young man, my offer holds good till this afternoon—if you aren't in jail before that time. And, if I were you, I'd just keep quiet about Miss—er—Mrs. Ames. Your story sounds all right to me, but then! I'm famous for believing things that aren't so. Here comes your money. You'll need it."

Hendricks stowed the heavy mass of coin into his pockets without counting it. Then he shook hands with the broker.

As Hendricks opened the door the broker followed him to say, in a low voice: "If I can be of any service to—er—Miss Mathews, I'll gladly act. But quietly, of course!"

"Understood!" Hendricks agreed and departed.

Gottal sat alone in his office for a long period, staring at the dusty ceiling. Then he picked up the morning papers, and carefully read the brief news about the arrival of the *Empress*, the secret escape of her unknown skipper, and the cabled dispatch from Honolulu stating that it had been reported that Captain Ames had

been slain at sea and his body thrown overboard while the mutineers sailed the schooner to Honolulu, but took fright there and set sail again, leaving on shore the single passenger, Captain W. Wilks, who was very ill, but had intimated enough about the tragedy to warrant the officials in instituting a sea-wide search for the alleged murderer, one Hendricks, who was also charged with slaying Ames's loyal mate, Peterson. The papers ended their stories with the statement that the authorities were convinced that it had been Hendricks who had brought the *Empress* into San Francisco.

"A pretty muddle!" groaned Gottal. "And of all the people in the world to be mixed up in it—Susan Mathews!"

Later he addressed his clerk: "Maury, the *Orchis* will sail to-night. The man you saw in my office will take her. Don't make the transfer of masters at the Custom House till I tell you. And don't breathe a word about anything to anybody! Not a blessed word!"

"*I* know that was Hendricks," Maury replied, in an aggrieved tone.

"The deuce you do!" was the tart reply. "But there are a million things you don't know and never shall."

Presently Gottal again spoke to Maury. "By the way, if you happen to be sure that a thing *isn't* so, for Heaven's sake don't tell it. Ten to one it's exactly the fatal truth."

Hendricks arrived before the Steiner Street house in mid-afternoon. When he rang the bell the same man-servant received him—but this time ushered him into a room quite differently furnished from the one he remembered as the scene of his first interview with Miss Mathews. A bright coal fire was in the grate, and various articles about showed that it was intimately tenanted by a woman. Almost before he had determined to seat himself, Mrs. Ames came in.

"I expected you," she said, quietly. "I thought you wouldn't be afraid to come."

"No," he answered. "Why should I?"

"Didn't you see the papers?" she demanded. "There is trouble over the *Empress*. They say my—Captain Ames was murdered with his mate, and that you have fled."

"That's old Papa Wilks talking down in Honolulu," Hendricks answered, flushing hotly. "I told you that there seemed to be trouble over some irregularity in the ship's papers. That was why I came ashore right away to see you."

"Then you didn't see either to-day's or yesterday's newspapers?"

"I did not. Too busy—not interested, anyway."

"Tell me exactly what happened," she said, briefly, sitting down.

At this Hendricks glanced around him in some perplexity. "I will. Won't someone disturb us here—the people of the house?"

She shook her head impatiently. "Please go on."

"It's not a long story. I wonder whether you could understand it."

"If you mean can I understand somebody wanting to kill Captain Ames—I may reply that I was his wife—for three months."

"If you will listen, I'll tell you all about it," he answered, earnestly. "As I told you, Ames took my schooner away from me by getting me into Dutch waters and then leaving me to fight it out with a Dutch gunboat. I was in forbidden seas, and as I had pearls and shells aboard which I couldn't have proved came from unforbidden regions, I stood to be captured and imprisoned. Then Ames came along and offered to save me from prison if I turned everything over to him. I did. He left me broke, with the choice of starving or joining him. I took the easiest way out of a bad mess, and went with him, though I gave him to understand that I didn't consider him above the level of a robber."

"I beg your pardon," said Miss Mathews, "but where did you say you came from?"

"I didn't say. Well, some years before that, Captain Ames had had a set-to with Billy Wilks. Wilks had a hard name, ran a hard ship, and was generally known as a bad customer. His quarrel with Ames was over—it was a personal affair."

Miss Mathews lifted her cloudless eyes. "A woman, of course?"

"Mrs. Wilks," Hendricks muttered.

"And Captain Wilks?"

"He went insane. That's the truth of the matter. He had to give in; it was too much for him. But Ames laughed at people who told him old Billy was dangerous, and took him along with him after he—he had punished him. I used to think he wanted Wilks to start something with him—was curious to know what the old fellow would do if he ever got his nerve up again."

"And what did he do?"

"You won't understand me when I say that Captain Ames had the upper hand of all of us. There was nothing Wilks could do. Ames had completely cowed him. Then there was Peterson, you see, always behind Ames."

"And Peterson? Did I understand that he is dead too?"

Hendricks solemnly nodded. "I'll make it short. This was Ames's last voyage, so he told me. He said several times that he was going to quit the South Seas. But just before this voyage was done, he takes sick and dies, telling me to take the schooner and the pearls up to you.

"You see the quandary I was in? Ames was dead in a shanty, and Peterson and Wilks, a hard couple to handle in the best of times, didn't know it. Wilks would fly right off the handle when he learned his old enemy was gone, and Peterson was plain brute. So I played Ames against them, fooled them about his death, got the body off to the ship at night, pretended the Captain was sleepy and cross, and got to sea. I figured that I could manage some way of getting rid of Peterson and Wilks; then the schooner and the money would be mine, which it seemed to me it rightfully was. Then I'd have been free again. But before I could make

my plans, Wilks runs amok, sneaked down into the cabin and thought he killed the skipper. See? It looked like he—or someone else—had really committed murder. Wilks didn't know the man was already dead; nor did Peterson. I had no witnesses to my story that Ames died on the island. I knew that those two men would swear my life away. So I let Wilks kill Peterson."

"Then this Wilks still thinks——"

"That he killed them both." Hendricks suddenly caught himself up and glanced apologetically at her. "Excuse me for speaking so plainly."

"And you say you 'allowed' this crazy old man to murder Mr. Peterson, the mate?"

With a comical gesture of despair, Hendricks threw his hands palm upward. "I said you wouldn't see how it was, how it all worked out as it must." He looked about the comfortable room. "Of course you couldn't. Here you are, quite comfortable, and working, I dare say, for nice folks. I'll warrant Captain Ames is pretty much of a dream to you, though you say you were his wife. How could you understand Papa Wilks?"

She leaned forward, and he saw a great gentleness in her expression. The formerly cold eyes were warm, glowing. "Maybe I understand better than you think," she told him, her chin on her cupped palms. "Poor man! And they are hunting for you high and low as a murderer."

"It seems likely they are," he said, rising. "And I mustn't embarrass you any more. What would your employers say if they found you had a caller who was liable to be hanged?"

She laughed, and rose with a nervous movement which he could not interpret. For a little while she gazed out of the window and said nothing. When she turned to him again, he saw a strange flush on her cheeks. She seemed younger.

"You saved me," she said, quietly. "The least I can do is to repay you by saving you in turn."

"I saved you?" he questioned, with incredulity in his tone.

"Yes. I thought I was for ever in that man's power."

"I didn't kill him," he said, dully.

"You don't understand, Captain Hendricks. Listen to me a moment: You see this house? All mine. I'm rich. I have always been rich."

He glanced at her oddly. "I took you for a maid here."

"Why?"

He puzzled over the answer, and conceded frankness. "I didn't see how you could have met and married Ames if you were—well, not a foolish but good-looking servant. Captain Ames wasn't exactly the man who, I'd fancy, would impress a woman like you."

She laughed shortly. "I accept the criticism, but I'll explain. I was barely twenty when I met him. He was at dinner at a friend's house. He was introduced to me as an explorer, a man who had had tremendous adventures all over the world. You know what a man he was. I came under his spell and ran away with him. I came back to this—to my own home. He was a fiend. Yet he didn't follow me, nor try to get me back. It was his way. He simply ignored me, as if we had never been married. It was his devilish scheme of never setting me free. He disappeared. I got a divorce. My marriage had been secret, and nobody except a very few knew of either that or of the divorce that followed. So I was free again, I thought. What a mistake! I knew he was still alive, somewhere, that some time he would come in and look at me and tell me to come back to him. And I should have gone to him, Captain. He was that kind of a man. I lived in horror. I was always thinking of him.

"And twice he sent word: both times it was just as if he had gone overnight and would be back in the afternoon. Every day I trained myself to meet him coldly and drive him from me. But at the bottom of my heart I felt helpless. Then you came. I didn't believe you when you said he was dead. I set it down as another cruelty of *his*—what he would call discipline!"

Hendricks did not like her smile of self-derision. "You had better not say any more," he muttered, soothingly.

"But now I am free," she went on, heedless of his distress. "I know you spoke the truth. He is dead. He can never walk in and stare at me out of his cold eyes and make me his slave again. I'm free!"

So extraordinary was her last gesture that Hendricks looked at her, appalled. She choked back her sobs and composed herself. Then a new, swift tenderness enveloped her.

"You saved me," she said, in a low voice. "You knew nothing about me, but you came thousands of stormy miles and risked your own liberty to make sure that I got my rights. You brought me pearls, not knowing that you brought me a thing of infinitely greater value, my freedom from terror and dread and shame. Now——"

"Now I'm going away," he said, in a strained tone.

"No!" she protested, quickly. "They will catch you. Can't you understand that there is a hue and cry for you? Haven't you told me yourself that you have no witnesses? and that Wilks has a terrible grudge to satisfy? that he will be wild to clear himself at your charge? There is only one thing that can save you now."

Hendricks rose and squared his bulky shoulders. Now he knew what this strange emotion was that held him in thrall. He must never cost any woman so heavily as Ames had cost this one. He, Hendricks, would and must protect her. He looked calmly down into her splendid eyes and smiled.

"You mustn't be mixed up with any more of us," he said. "As you say, you are free. It wouldn't do for you to be mixed up in this business—a lady like you. If they came here after me—if anyone suspected that you were once Ames's wife—it would be horrible."

"Where are you going?" she demanded.

"Down to the police-station," he answered.

"But why? What will you say?"

Again he smiled confidently, reassuringly. "Why, I'll just tell 'em I did kill Ames and stand pat on that."

"But you didn't kill him!"

"That's true," he said, "just as true as that Papa Wilks didn't, either. But if I'd known you, I'd have killed him."

"And you will go down and be put in jail and tried for a murder you didn't commit, and be hanged, just because—oh, what nonsense!"

"It isn't nonsense," he said, with firm quietness. "Don't you know that you will be mixed up in this pretty soon, unless they stop searching? They'll discover you were his wife, which you have kept a secret, and they'll heap scandal on you, and make a witness out of you. Now, if they have me, I'm the only man that knows anything about the affair, and I can keep a tight mouth, and you never say a word, and somehow I'll pull through with nobody a mite the worse."

She stared at him with wide eyes, scanning his face, scrutinizing every movement of his lips. When he had done, she sighed. "I never thought I would do it," she said, enigmatically. "Much less suppose I'd be glad to!"

"Do what?" he questioned.

"A very simple thing," she responded. "You say you aren't known here?"

"Only by one or two people."

"Would they—tell?"

Hendricks recalled Gottal's nervous figure and alert countenance. He shook his head. "No, they wouldn't tell."

"Then we shall get along famously. You must do exactly as I ask you this afternoon. It's a simple little way out of this matter. I want your promise that you will do precisely what I ask you to, and say exactly what I tell you to."

He hesitated long, wondering at the reason of her eagerness to bind him by his word of honour. He decided that she had some scheme that would not matter either way. Her lovely pleading deserved a reward. He promised: "Honour bright!"

"Wait here a moment," she said, swiftly. "No—I'll ring."

The manservant appeared. "Judkins, have the carriage around in five minutes. Tell Cicely to bring my hat and coat and gloves."

Hendricks surveyed his own coarse clothes with a flicker of amusement in his eyes. "I'm hardly dressed to go out with you."

"You do look as if you were just back from the uttermost seas. So much the better! Ah, here's Cicely."

Curiously he watched the delicate fashion in which Mrs. Ames garbed herself for the street, with the elderly maid's assistance. Then Judkins entered and performed his part in the ritual. He observed that the man was extremely grave and once or twice looked at his mistress appealingly. She responded by a faint, kind smile.

Within half an hour the carriage had threaded the foggy streets, descended into the lower city, and rolled down Market Street to a high office building.

In the elevator he pondered the nature of their errand, and gave it up. He resolved that he would take care not to let her compromise herself.

They were received in the first room of what seemed a large suite by a young clerk who ushered them on and into a large room occupied by a grey-haired man; it struck Hendricks that he had never before seen a man so completely and distinctly elderly without being old. He jumped up, quite youthfully, holding out both hands to Mrs. Ames.

"I'm glad to see you, Susan," he said, cordially. "I saw the story in the papers this morning——" He glanced at Hendricks and was silent.

"About Captain Ames's schooner turning up without him," she finished, putting up her veil. "Yes, that's what brought me here. I told the Captain here I would explain it. You never met Captain Ames, did you, Judge?"

"Never," he remarked, with a second careless glance at Hendricks. "Unless I had helped you——" Again he stopped.

"Unless you had helped me get a divorce, you'd never have known he existed, is what you intended to say. The Captain here—you may as well not beat about the bush, Judge."

"As sure as my name is Barrett, Susan, I always considered Captain Ames as a myth. The Captain here will excuse me for speaking so frankly, as I suppose he knows about it."

Miss Mathews swallowed, flushed, and cast down her eyes. "He ought to," she said, slowly. "Judge Barrett, let me introduce Captain Ames. Captain Ames, this is Judge Barrett, who got our divorce."

The lawyer flushed, too, in anger. His shrewd eyes met Hendricks's with a cold sharpness that could be felt. "So you've turned up at last?"

Hendricks was about to respond with an equally chill protest against being identified wrongfully, when he caught his companion's warning glance. He was silent. The attorney sat down, as if feeling more secure that way, and there was absolutely no cordiality in his tone as he said curtly: "Well, what is the business for this morning, Susan?"

"I see by the papers that there has been a report that Captain Ames—my husband—was killed down in the South Seas. He tells me that the rumour is due to the idle talk of a man who is crazy."

"Evidently," was the dry response.

"And so I told him we had better get the matter settled right away. So I brought him here."

"Simple enough, in one way," Judge Barrett replied, scowling. "If he's alive and well, that is enough for the Government. No *corpus delecti*, naturally. But"—here he swung his chair round so that he faced Hendricks—"you will allow me to tell you that I don't admire your fashion of turning up here, Captain. It looks to me like a plain case of plotting to get your former wife mixed up in your affairs again. Understand me right here: she is absolutely divorced from you (I saw to that) and you have

no claim on her, on her sympathy, or on her fortune. I honestly believe you set the stage this way, and have worked on her feelings. There is just one consideration which influences me to go ahead and stop the Government's search for you, and that is the fact that this fine woman here hasn't a single honourable soul in this world to look after her interests unselfishly, and I'm going to still do my best for her."

His tirade was interrupted by a husky, "Please don't!" from Mrs. Ames. The Judge gave her one glance of pity, and continued, looking hard at Hendricks:—

"Miss Mathews (thank God the Court gave her back her own honest name!) told me enough about you for me to judge you. You may impose on poor wretches in the coral islands, but right here in San Francisco your bluff doesn't go—Susan, be quiet!—Now I'll tell you exactly how far *I'll* go. I'll tell the United States District Attorney that you are alive and I've seen you, and that the report from Honolulu is a canard. That'll make him drop the matter instantly. Then I'll take up the formal complaint against your schooner of violating port regulations and settle *that*. All this I do on one single condition, and that is that you never breathe to a soul that you ever had the honour of being this lady's husband, that you leave the city immediately, and that you don't ask her for, or accept from her, a solitary red cent! *Do* you understand?"

During this speech, delivered in a low voice with an intensity of utterance that seemed born of an almost uncontrollable inward emotion, Hendricks had been first astounded, then wrathful, then vigilant; at the end of it he made up his mind that he couldn't at this late stage go back on his word given to Miss Mathews. He must play up! Just as he had smiled at Killer Ames, so he now smiled at Judge Barrett.

"I can't discuss the matter with you, Judge," he said, easily. "I promised Miss Mathews I would leave things in her hands. If she puts them in yours, all I can do is to see to it that you——"

"That I what?" rasped the lawyer, breaking in at the slight pause Hendricks had allowed.

"That you look after her interests without bothering her too much about your own," was the calm conclusion.

Barrett nodded with a scowl, and rang his bell.

"Get the United States District Attorney's office on the 'phone for me," he snapped to the clerk.

The ensuing conversation over the wire was lengthy, and several times the lawyer was compelled to repeat: "Yes, Captain Ames is in my office at this moment." Presently he looked up and asked Hendricks gruffly: "Who brought the schooner into port?"

"I did," was the reply.

"Why that preposterous mystery about your being on board? Who was the fellow who assumed to be the master of the ship and later escaped from the quarantine station?"

"Myself. I had important business ashore, and I wasn't going to be hindered by a lot of fools."

"H-m!" responded Barrett, and resumed his conversation over the telephone.

"Well, that's settled," he said at last, and turned to Miss Mathews. "Now, Susan, you've done your part nobly. What next? You know you're not bound to this man in any way, explicit or implied. Within an hour the newspapers will have the information that Ames is alive and in San Francisco. You mustn't be mixed up in this. Not at all! So you leave him here and I'll see to it that he tells the reporters exactly enough and no more. You go back home and thank your stars that you *did* come to your senses and get a divorce from him." The Judge rose and stood over her. "He's not your husband! You understand that, Susan?"

"Yes, yes!" she said.

"Well! Now, you just slip home and sit quiet and forget him."

Miss Mathews paid no attention to this; she seemed to be in a profound reverie.

"You are concealing something from me," she said, slowly. "I know it, Judge. The district attorney told you something which you are keeping back, and you want to get rid of me right away, so that you can do something to Captain—Ames here."

"What could I possibly do, Susan?"

"Something," she said, firmly. "I am sure of it. You hate him, and you fancy you would be doing me a great favour if you—if you punished him." She turned to Hendricks with a troubled glance. "I'll stand by you," she said, simply.

"By heavens!" Barrett burst out. "Listen, Susan. Do you want your name in big type all over the first pages of the newspapers? with the story of your childish elopement written in full? branding you as the divorced wife of a——"

"Of a what?" she whispered. "Tell us, Judge! *What else is there?*"

The lawyer's stern countenance grew tender. He leaned over and patted her hand with a paternal air. "All right, Susan! I guess I'm your oldest friend and I'll—I might as well tell you now as later—for you'll find it out. This man here is wanted for *murder*."

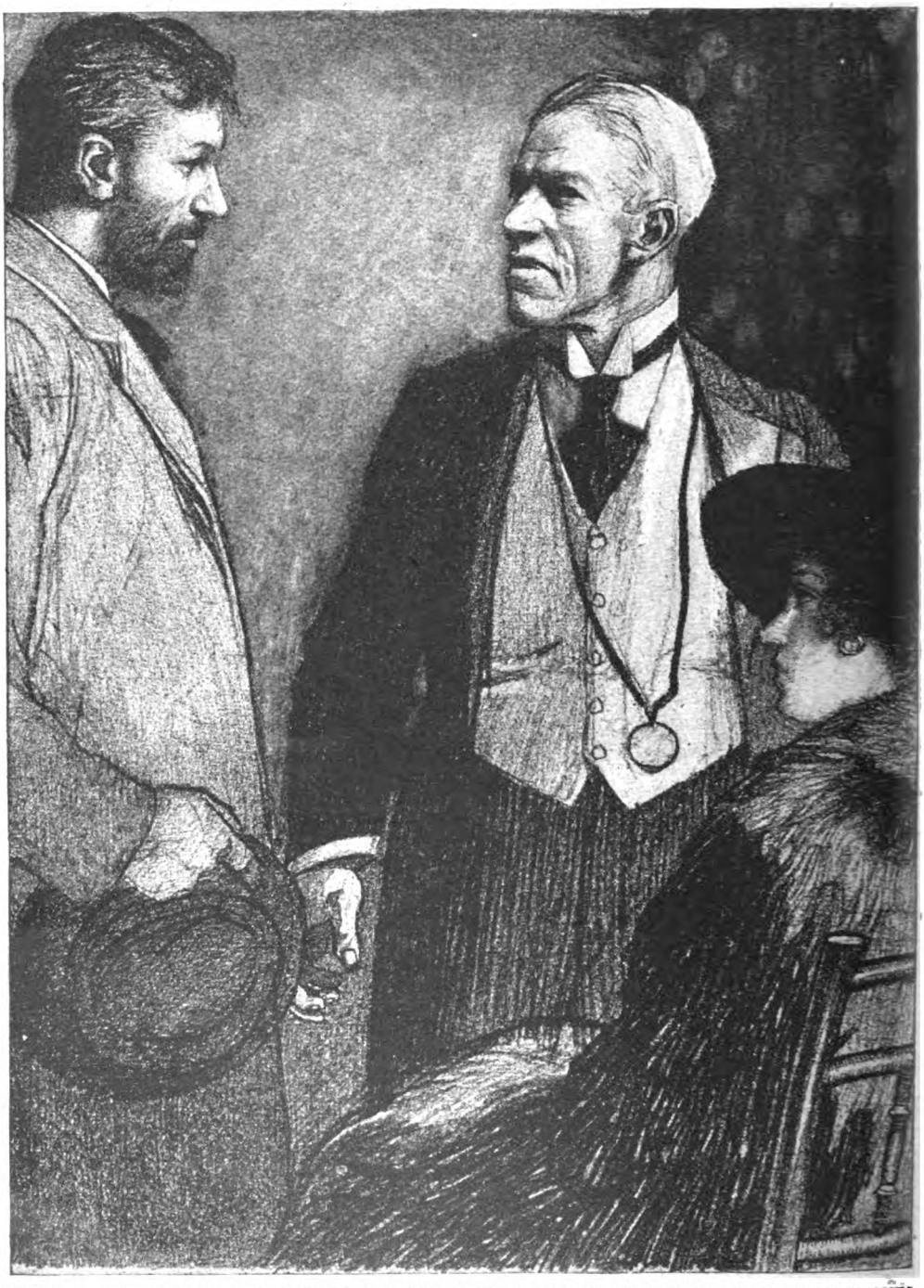
"But he's here to answer for himself and——" she began. Then a look of horror came into her eyes. "Oh!" she gasped. She forced herself to glance at Hendricks. "But you said you didn't kill him," she breathed.

"Mr. Peterson *was* killed," the Judge said, in a flat voice.

Hendricks knew that he could no longer play the part thrust upon him. He bent over towards Miss Mathews and said in a fresh, strong voice: "I'll tell him the whole thing."

Her expression of terror stopped him. "No!" she whispered. "Let me think."

"She is right," said the lawyer, calmly. "And I may as well tell you, Captain Ames, that anything you may say in this office will go straight to the district attorney. I thought you were a myth and trusted never to hear of you again. Now that you have put me in a position for ever to destroy your power over



"'SHE IS RIGHT,' SAID THE LAWYER, CALMLY. 'AND I MAY AS WELL TELL YOU, CAPTAIN AMES, ANYTHING YOU MAY SAY IN THIS OFFICE WILL GO STRAIGHT TO THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY.'"

this good woman here, whose confidence you have so grossly abused, I shall hesitate at nothing. And as sure as I am before you, I'll see you swing for the murder of Peterson."

"The Judge is absolutely right," Hendricks told her instantly. "Nothing you can do now."

Miss Mathews rose, her face unclouded again, her eyes once more as cold and chill as a lake.

She smiled serenely on her attorney. "Oh, you're so wearisome at times," she remarked, pulling down her veil. "The Captain and I are much obliged to you, I'm sure. We come here for help, and you"—she laughed lightly—"you forget yourself. Come, Captain!"

Barrett rose, his face scarlet. "You are not going out on the street with this man," he said, curtly.

"Why not?" she demanded.

"Because within five minutes he will be arrested as a murderer. I am not going to see you mixed up in this."

"But I am," she responded. "And now I have one thing to tell you, my dear friend—for I know you have been and always will be my friend. If you have set the officers on my—yes, on my husband's track, you will keep them off for a while. I came here because I wanted advice and help. I made a terrible mistake. You will regret it to your dying day if you make my poor error without remedy!"

"I am acting for your own good," he protested.

"And I tell you," she responded, quietly, "that I shall refuse to leave this office until you assure me that you will not betray Captain—Ames."

Barrett swung on Hendricks. "Haven't you manhood enough to stand on your own feet?"

"Sure," was the troubled answer. "But Miss Mathews may insist!"

"I shall," she said, composedly. "Either he goes freely out of this place with me, and you promise not to betray him, or I'll stay here and take the consequences with him."

"They'll arrest you too, Susan! as an accessory after the fact—at best, as a witness."

"That is your look-out," she responded, dryly.

"All right, I give in," the Judge muttered. "I'll keep my hands off for—until to-night. Then I'll keep my word to the district attorney and help the Government all that is in my power."

"Till to-night!" she repeated. "Thank you!" She held out her hand and smiled.

They passed out and descended to the street without a word. Once more in the carriage, Hendricks said, briefly: "If you will let me out in a block or so, I'll see what I can do to straighten this affair."

"I made an awful mess of it, didn't I?" she murmured. "I thought, of course, that if Captain Ames were found, the rest would be simple. I only made things worse, for now they will be sure you killed Peterson."

"You did a very fine and gallant thing," he said, quietly. "I know what it must have cost you to claim the name of Ames even for an hour."

"I never expected to do it," she said, thoughtfully. "I had prayed that he would die. Strange that I should have tried to bring him to life again—in you."

"The Judge is right in his advice and his warning," he went on. "He will keep your confidence, I know. He'll never tell that you were in his office with me. He'll simply say he refused to accept me as a client. I have till to-night. By that time you will know nothing about me, and never be disturbed in any way. So I'll just leave you now."

"I knew you would insist on that. It is like you." She was silent a little while before going on: "I like to know that there is a man like you in the world. You have forgiven me for my criminal stupidity?"

"The finest compliment a woman could pay a man!" he protested. "I want you to remember that all my life, and in the next, if there be one, I'll never forget that you accepted me as your husband for a little moment. I wish——"

He ceased abruptly and gazed gloomily out into the fog. Miss Mathews presently laughed a little. "I'll always remember, too. It was so fine that the name of Ames could be carried by a gentleman, even if for a moment only—it makes me a trifle happier. I'm not sorry for myself—sorry for you."

"It was worth all that it will cost me," he returned, simply. "And in the future, when you think of me, just recall that I bore the title of your husband helplessly at first, willingly at the end."

"But you aren't—you can't——"

"I must," he said. "You have taken the responsibility with Judge Barrett. He must never know you told a falsehood. He could not forgive you, because he loves you. And while no one else in the world will know, you and I will always remember that I—that I was glad to be Captain Ames. If matters had been different—what's the use?" He paused a moment. Then: "Stop the carriage and I'll get out here," he finished, huskily.

Obediently she signalled the coachman, and they drew up by the kerb. Hendricks moved out in the driving fog and looked into the interior of the carriage at the woman who had turned her face to his. "It's good-bye!" he murmured.

"Not yet!" she said, hastily, and stepped out beside him. Before he could protest she had directed the coachman to go home without them.

"We'll walk together a way," she said, glancing about them. "What a thick fog! No one can ever see us."

"What is the use of taking risks?" he demanded. "We are near your house. At any moment a friend may come on us. It may compromise you."

"I don't care, just now," she said, coldly. "I must satisfy my conscience before I let you go."

He was about to answer when a figure came out of the mist, came toward them, was almost past but stopped short.

"Of all the people!" said Gottal, lifting his hat. "Miss Mathews, I was just up to see you. Hendricks, you've got to vanish in an hour. Somebody has lit a bonfire and you'll be scorched. I can't understand it! Word has gone out that Ames is in the city."

Miss Mathews lifted her misty veil and glanced

at the broker's nervous face. "Then you are acquainted with Captain Hendricks?" she asked, wonderingly.

"Known him for years," said Gottal, promptly. "Saw him this morning. Know his story—and yours, too," he added. "That was why I went up to see you, Miss Mathews. Knowing what I did, I thought I'd warn you. Never expected to find Hendricks with you, I swear!"

"So you know about—my marriage," she said.

"Never so surprised in my life!" said the broker, turning with them and walking on. "But—well, you're well rid of *him*. But someone has made an awful stir—the Federal Building hummed with the news that Ames had turned up. Now, who the deuce——"

"It's my fault, Mr. Gottal," she interposed. With a detached air, as if she were chatting merely to pass the time, she briefly related the morning's events. When she concluded, the broker reached over and shook hands with her.

"It doesn't surprise me a bit," he announced. "Just like you! But we'll admit the mess. Now for a way out of it! Barrett is a chump. Should never have called the district attorney up. Wholly needless. Ought to have seen into things first. Trust a lawyer in love with his client to lose his head."

"Judge Barrett is not!" she said, warmly.

"Nonsense," returned Gottal. "We're all in love with you, and you know it. All of us. Hendricks is, I know, and he's seen you for the first time yesterday."

"I believe that is true," Hendricks remarked.

Suddenly the woman between them sobbed. Both men glanced at her in alarm. They saw her face contorted with pain, like a child's, heard the choking in her throat.

"What's the matter?" demanded Gottal, hastily.

She shook her head, then gave way to her emotions. "I'm only a girl—and so lonely," she sobbed, hiding her face in her hands. "I want to do things right—and I always do them wrong, and people pity me and say unkind things! I know I've done wrong. I've got Captain Hendricks into awful trouble. I—I don't know which way to turn."

"There are two of us here, my dear!" Gottal said, gently. "I can answer for Hendricks—known him for years. Know my own heart. Turn to us!" He took her shaking hands in his and went on: "Now you've done your part. You've made no mistake this day, dear girl. You've done the finest act ever a woman did—taken a name you hate to save a man you"—he bent far over her bowed head—"a man who loves you."

"I don't want to be loved!" she whispered, desperately. "I want to be free—to be my own master, to do right things all by myself."

"Good enough!" the broker assented, promptly. "We're both here. Hendricks has an hour to get aboard my schooner, the *Orchis*, and beat to sea or fall into the hands of the authorities with little chance of clearing himself. I have a lifetime to spend doing anything that will help you to gain your own sweet ends. This is no time for us to argue. Which of us is it to be?"

"Which?" she repeated, looking up in bewilderment. "I don't understand."

"*We* understand perfectly," Gottal returned. "You're the widow of Ezra Ames, and you fought to be free of him. Comes George Hendricks from the South Pacific with a message. Murder's been done. Somebody says Ames was killed. Hendricks is the only man who knows all about it. He tells a story that no one will quite believe. You have a story which sounds fishy. Ezra Ames's two worst enemies together! Who killed him? George Hendricks. Why? Because he loved Susan Mathews, and because Ezra had plenty of money and left it all in a will to Susan. There's just one other human being who knows all the parties, and that's Henry Gottal, shipbroker. He's in love with Susan Mathews, too. Not in love with her like Judge Barrett, who'll kill and slay to win her, but really and honestly and humbly in love with her—and willing to make her choice easy."

"I understand one thing," Hendricks put in, quietly. "That is that Miss Mathews needs us *both*. I must get away. She must never be connected with Ezra Ames. You must look to that."

"Too late!" said Gottal. "Ames may be dead, but he still has a finger in the pie. She *is* mixed up in this affair already. That's why I'm here away from my office. I tried to get ahead of the reporters."

"Judge Barrett promised he wouldn't say a word till to-night!" she put in, sadly.

"It's out of his hands," was the response. He pulled a damp newspaper out of a pocket, and pointed to the great headlines on the first page. "Read that!"

Hendricks took the sheet and read aloud from it, in a dull voice that barely reached his companions' ears:—

Captain Ezra Ames is alive and in San Francisco, according to a report which reached the office of United States District Attorney Fenton to-day. But the mystery surrounding the report of his murder in the South Seas and the secret arrival of his schooner Empress *at this port the day before yesterday is deepened by the following despatch from Honolulu, which brings into this strange affair the name of one of San Francisco's most prominent heiresses:—*

HONOLULU—4 p.m. Bishop and Company, bankers, this afternoon offered for probate the last will and testament of Ezra Ames, late master of the schooner Empress, *for whose murderer a world wide search has been begun and W. Wilks held as a witness in the case. The document, dated two years ago, bequeaths the entire estate to Ames's divorced wife, Susan Mathews of San Francisco. Bishop and Company set the value of the property in their hands at a million and a half dollars.*

"That's an extra," Gottal remarked. "Inside of two hours the papers will have columns, with pictures and interviews."

"You will get that fortune easily enough, anyway," Hendricks said, slowly. "If I go down and give myself up as George Hendricks, I guess no one will keep Ames alive even in the papers. Then you can claim your money."

"Exactly," the broker added. "Barrett will keep his mouth shut as soon as he finds out you told him a fib. Hendricks here takes what blame is going; you merely keep quiet, allow the affair to blow over, and are a couple of millions richer; or we own up and I identify Hendricks here, produce you as the widow, and generally act as your agent. What could be simpler?"

"You haven't made the matter clear," Hendricks remarked, his face very sober. He turned to the girl beside him with a little gesture of reassurance. "What Gottal means is this: your secret is out, and that's all there is to it. But there is no shame attached to it. Ames has paid you the biggest of compliments—left you his money, after all. You simply take it, as your right. Ames dies right here—again. I swear I'm Hendricks, and Gottal backs me up. My papers prove it. I'll tell my yarn and I get clear after a while. There is one thing for you to do. Gottal will escort you home. Here's where I leave you."

"All right," growled the broker. "Hendricks isn't wrong in that."

"But he'll go to jail!" she said.

"Or get away on my schooner," Gottal remarked. "Of course if he does *that*, you won't be able to prove Ames's death, and the legacy will be tied up."

"What do I want of the money?" she cried. "I wouldn't touch it. It would be only another bond to tie me down to what I hate. Captain Hendricks, you must go away on the schooner!"

"Hush!" the broker warned, hastily, and pointed to the big house looking up in the fog. "There are reporters on the steps already. Probably a few detectives as well."

They paused and then drew back to the corner, by common consent. There Gottal said emphatically: "Now or never! Susan Mathews, if you go up those steps, you've got to tell your story. You've got to say whether Ames is alive or dead. You've got to explain whether Hendricks is known to you or not—you've got to talk, and what you say you've got to stick to till your dying day."

"If I say he's dead?"

"They'll want to know how you know it. They'll demand information as to the man who escaped from the schooner over at quarantine and came to see you. But when you've told 'em, it's all ended."

She raised her head proudly and addressed Hendricks.

"I've made my choice," she said, in a low, clear voice. "Maybe I'm wrong, and maybe I'll suffer once more for doing it. But—will you take me with you?"

"On the *Orchis?*" he stammered. "As—as Mrs. Ames?"

"Have you nothing better to offer me?" she demanded, in a whisper. "No better name?"

Hendricks did not move, but stood in the blowing fog as if suddenly fallen into a profound dream. His face was that of a man seeing an inward vision, undisturbed by the world about him. He stood at the climax of his adventurous life, and the woman whose voice called to him, though silent, knew that the man before her was deciding for them both, as a man should, in the innermost heart of him.

It was as if destiny spoke at last, irrevocably and finally. Without a word the three of them turned their backs on the great house lifting its stony walls to the veiled sky, left behind them the voices of men who would burst their world to shards, and proceeded down the long hill towards the bay. Gottal sighed once or twice, peering at the ground as if to rediscover what he had lost. He did not observe the girl's look of exaltation nor her companion's steady expression of resolution. Yet some inner sense told him when their groping hands clasped. He raised his eyes and smiled.

Mid-afternoon, and the fog swirled over the coast, flooding in from sea before the wind as if to bury all that man had built under its tide of darkness. Out of the shadow a schooner swept, plunging her high bows under the foaming crests of the long Pacific rollers. For a moment she remained visible to the eyes of a little group on the bridge of a tug whose black streamer of smoke flew against the low grey clouds; then the vessel rose on a great surge, balanced an instant and swept on and into the invisible. Gottal shivered, drawing his dripping overcoat closer about him. The tug-boat master dropped a husky remark.

"So Hendricks married an heiress, did he? Lucky dog!"

"Heiress? Hardly. Hendricks did all the inheriting himself, I guess. He was only a temporary heir at first. Now he's permanently in possession of all that Killer Ames left that was worth a cent."

"Ames left a lot o' money and pearls, too," expostulated the other.

"Pearls? Dead pearls, Captain."

And on the flying *Orchis*, Susan Hendricks, looking into her husband's eyes, laughed, letting the pearls for which Killer Ames had ravaged a world drip through her careless fingers to the deck—to roll back and forth, lustreless and forgotten in the great light of love and life.

THE END.

The "Tanks."

By

COLONEL E. D. SWINTON, C.B., D.S.O.,
Royal Engineers.

This article, which was written at the request, and is published with the sanction, of the Authorities, is the first authoritative account which has yet been placed before the public.

[Colonel Swinton, the writer of the following most interesting article, is already well known to "STRAND" readers by such masterly stories as "In the Valley," "A Sense of Touch," and "Full-Back," and as the author of "The Green Curve."]

"The truth; nothing but the truth; but not the whole truth."

ON a certain Friday in September, 1916, after two years of fighting, when it might have been thought that human ingenuity in the art of killing had been exhausted, a fresh engine of war was suddenly sprung upon a world sick of hearing of new methods of slaughter. A day or two later, so soon as the newspapers were able to give some information about this development, the word "Tank" was on all British lips, and since that moment has probably been spoken, written, and printed more often than during the whole previous period since its incorporation into the English language.

This prosaic little word, also, has by its association with one of the most striking episodes of the world war and one of the few technical surprises which the Allies have so far sprung on their enemies, and by the fact that its novel application signalized the birth of a new arm, been invested with a romantic meaning of which it can never be deprived. The machine it describes is no ephemeral weapon of occasion—the materialization of a happy thought for one special operation. Whatever the counter-measures it may call into being, and although its present immature shape may be as remote from its eventual perfection as "Puffing Billy" from a compound decapod freight locomotive, the Tank has come to stay. That Friday in September, 1916, marked a step forward. It was the beginning of an era in which dwindling manpower will force more and more into prominence the necessity for the conservation of life, and in which the power and insensi-

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lility of machinery will have to be as fully exploited upon the field of battle as they have been in that of industry.

It is not only in English that the word suddenly acquired importance and an entirely fresh significance, for it has enriched the military vocabularies of many other languages, including German, which have borrowed it in its new sense. And curious as it is to British ears to hear "Tank" pronounced by Frenchmen, Russians, Italians, and Roumanians, it would probably sound yet more strange to Americans, in whose slang it has a meaning quite unknown even amongst the most bibulous over on this side.

Whilst on the subject of this name, it may not be out of place to satisfy general curiosity as to a minor detail by answering the question, "Why 'Tank'?" Why should a fighting automobile have been so inappropriately named? The reply can be given in two words—for secrecy. In its experimental stage the machine was known as a "land-cruiser" or "landship." But it is a military platitude that the "element of surprise"—as it is always called in the text-books—has immense value in war; and it was naturally realized that the greatest results to be expected from the employment of this new weapon would be attained if it could be launched unexpectedly, so that the enemy might be caught unprepared to meet it. And when it crystallized into a definite shape, and reached the stage of production, it became obvious that its original names were far too suggestive of the real thing. It was, therefore, decided to christen it by some non-committal word which would give no inkling of its nature to those not "in the know," and would, at the same time, be sufficiently descriptive and short to be readily adopted by all legitimately concerned.

Quite a large part of the earlier stage of manufacture would consist of the rolling of steel plates and their assemblage and erection into boxes, which, to all except those who made a close examination, might well be intended for vessels to hold water, petrol, or oil. The fact that the boxes would be bullet-proof would merely lend colour to the idea that they might be intended to move up into the fighting zone. This theory would not necessarily be discredited even when the stage of fitting them with engines and caterpillar tracks was reached. It would not be until the time for mounting the armament that their real purpose must become plain, up to which moment an *alias* might to some extent conceal it. "Reservoir." and "cistern" were long-winded and clumsy; "Tank" was equally accurate, and shorter. And "Tank" it became. As a matter of fact, various rumours about the new machines were current amongst those who got wind of them. One was that they were intended to carry water for the troops across the deserts of Egypt and Mesopotamia. A second hinted at snow-ploughs for use on the Russian front. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that no special trouble was taken to contradict these yarns. It was also bruited about that experiments had been made in some wild-cat scheme which had failed absolutely.

The idea that this name would "catch on" was justified beyond anticipation. Employed as a bluff during the stage of production and training, it stuck. It was adopted by the troops at the Front and by the public at home, whose enthusiasm was aroused by the dramatic appearance and success of the new weapon, and whose fancy was tickled by its title. It thus obtained further sanction and was introduced to the whole world. In England the Tank became a popular gag in the revues, a subject for songs and the *motif* of dances. The word was, in fact, almost run to death.

One good point common to both the German home-made equivalent terms is that they do not lend themselves to the making of lyrics, for neither "*Panzerkraftwagen*" nor "*Schützengrabenvernichtungsautomobil*" is likely to be used as the refrain of a topical song in vaudeville.

The machines were yet otherwise miscalled. During the summer of 1916 an enemy agent, trying to tap the wires in England, might have been mystified to pick up some such messages as: "Twelve Willies reach you to-day," or "Send tails for six females." "Willie," a pet cognomen adopted as suitable for the telephone, and obviating the use of a code for telegrams, was suggested by the fact that the first experimental "landship" completed, though equally malevolent, was smaller and less powerful for evil than its immediate successor—eventually the type adopted. When the two creatures were together they gave the ludicrous impression of being child and parent of a monstrous and evil brood. Hence, naturally, "Little Willie" and "Big Willie." The "Big Willies" were also somewhat unbiologically classified as males and females, according to their armament. Incidentally, to help to conceal the destination of the Tanks at the stage when any allusion as to their purpose was precluded, they were painted with the inscription:

"With care: To Petrograd" in large Russian characters. This, of course, was merely following up the line suggested by the snow-plough fiction.

During transportation secrecy was maintained in various ways. Whilst being conveyed by rail—a process to which they lend themselves admirably—the Tanks were concealed under tarpaulins. They were also always loaded up after dark; and on those nights when "Willies" were being dispatched, the scene on the manœuvre ground, "somewhere" in England, was almost Dantesque. The train of flat trucks and special length of side-track were brilliantly lit up by acetylene flares; and out from the gloom, into the circle of light and back again into the outer dark, over glistening mud or through shimmering clouds of dust, continually crawled a procession of slug-shaped monsters, purring, panting, and emitting flames as they slid over the ground.

This operation, which happened to be repeated several times during the Zeppelin raid season, was on one occasion interrupted by some of the aerial marauders, whose visit added considerable excitement to the proceedings. Entrainment was in full blast when suddenly a signal was given. At once every light in the loading yard was extinguished, and every Tank froze to stillness where it stood, darkness and uncanny silence taking the place of glare and the throbbing bustle of work. After a few minutes of tense expectancy, by the time that the ear had been able to attune itself to the change from clamour to peace, a faint humming noise made itself heard afar off on high. The sound approached, grew louder, and gradually changed to a high-pitched purring, which seemed to fill the whole sky as a Zeppelin droned up overhead and circled above the stationary machines in the "Tankodrome," like a night owl quartering a field of corn above a colony of paralyzed field-mice. No hint was given, however, to betray to the Hun skipper that directly underneath him lay a collection of new and secret weapons for the slaying of his "*Gebrüderei*"—a nest of scorpions in pickle for his "*Kameraden*" on *terra firma*, which, even to his mind, might have seemed a target worthier of high

ONE OF THE MONSTERS WHICH "LOOMED UP THROUGH THE MIST AND HEAVED ITS BULK ACROSS THE CRATER-PITTED SURFACE OF NO MAN'S LAND TOWARDS THE STARTLED HUNS."

Photo by Canadian War Record.

explosive than sleeping women and children: and after a few minutes the airship sailed away, to unload its murderous cargo of bombs at a point some miles distant. Thrice was this visit repeated during the night—whether by the same Zeppelin or by others it is not easy to say. Finally, after a respectful interval, up went the lights, the Tanks came back to life, and the circus performance proceeded.

It was a curious phase of modern war as waged in three dimensions.

That all the care and precautions taken were successful in their object is now a matter of history. Though the Germans apparently had a suspicion that some surprise was in preparation, they had no knowledge of its nature until a day or two before the Tanks were "let out of the bag," when their aviators reported certain objects that looked like armoured motors at certain places behind our lines. Beyond this they were unprepared, and had taken no special measures to meet the attack, which after all was the business end of the matter.

So much for nomenclature and mystery-making. The readers of this article will have become impatient for the writer to "cut the cackle and come to the 'osses," or, in other words, to "cut it out." Unluckily, however, most of what can be said amounts to little more than cackle. It is in the circumstances impossible to present, even to the public of a nation which is fighting the common foe, more than a very incomplete account, lacking in information and details on the very points upon which an accurate statement of facts would be most enlightening and welcome. And it is obvious that this must be so when a weapon actually in use is the subject of discussion, more especially when it is still in its infancy and owes a great part of its potentialities for the future to whatever of its nature and capabilities still remains unknown to the enemy.

Were it not for such limitations, it would be instructive to describe the mechanical evolution of the Tank from its embryonic stage until the actual monster, complete in its then form, loomed up through the mist on the morning of September 15th and amidst the laughter of our infantry heaved its bulk across the crater-pitted surface of No Man's Land towards the startled Huns. For other reasons, also, it is not yet possible to give an account of the fight waged against apathy, inertia, and other obstacles, which, though merely a repetition of the history of the struggle for life of every other invention that has forced its way into existence for the benefit of a conservative and unimaginative race, possesses its own special interest. Of the genesis of the machine, the need for it, the reasons that suggested the possibility of its construction, and the general *rôle* it was designed to play, something can be written. But no such light can be thrown on the points of how far in practice it came up to expectations, to what extent and in what directions it failed to do so, and what lessons for the future its performance has afforded. These are particulars upon which indiscreet disclosures might give information of the utmost value to an enemy who, alert and enterprising enough, has not had the practical experience which we have bought and paid for in cash, brains, and lives.

Novel to the present generation as is the Tank, the basic principle underlying it—*i.e.*, the provision of collective protection to troops attacking, and therefore on the move—is not new. It has exerted its influence ever since the time when engines capable of throwing large numbers of missiles took their place in warfare. The present machine is the result of evolution, through intermediate stages, as mechanical science has grown, of old prototypes, such as the Roman testudo, or tortoise, and the mediæval belfry, used in siege operations, in which the missile-throwing power of the defence gradually forced on the attack the adoption of some form of mobile protection. The reason for its production is the same (making allowance for development) as that which was responsible for the tortoise of old—the great fire-power of the defence, of recent years greatly intensified by the introduction of the machine-gun. The possibility of producing it is due to the perfection of the internal-combustion engine, to which also the ordinary automobile, the aeroplane, the submarine, and the airship owe their existence.

Ever since the appearance of the magazine rifle the advantage that would be conferred on the attack by employing a moving armoured shield, fort, or cupola has indeed been so obvious that a vague consciousness of it has probably at some time or other formed the subject of the day-dreams even of those not directly concerned with war, but happening to possess some knowledge of military history and mechanics and to be blessed with imagination. Since the introduction of the machine-gun, and the more recent appearance of the armoured motor-car of the ordinary wheeled type, the concrete idea of constructing some such engine has

occurred to the minds of many more, especially to engineers.*

But, as the Bible has it, "Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire," or, in other words, it is one thing to dream and another to convert a dream into actuality. And it would, no doubt, be of human interest to make some reference to the personal element and the share of responsibility attributable to individuals for the realization of what has long been a subject of aspirations. This, however, is neither the time nor the place to do it. The subject has already been rendered controversial by the contradictory statements and the various claims for the credit of the invention which have appeared in the Press. It will be touched upon here only on broad lines, the truth being that several people have been concerned to a greater or lesser degree at different stages, though the merit of inventing some of the crucial mechanical details can definitely be ascribed to individuals.

Nevertheless, one assertion has been publicly made by a writer of eminence and weight, which must be refuted. Mr. H. G. Wells, who prophesied to the world the arrival of such a monster as the Tank so long as thirteen years before it appeared, and who in his "War and the Future," published in 1917, gives an excellent description of the existing machine, and a most illuminating imaginative forecast of its future evolution, both implies and states specifically in that book that the Tanks have not come from military sources, but have been thrust upon the soldiers from without.

This is a sweeping indictment of a whole class, reiterated complacently and with apparent satisfaction, but incorrect and presumably based on ignorance of the facts.

It is true that certain people who are not soldiers have played a very large and valuable part in creating the Tank. It is also true that others who are soldiers have not done so. But the first to appreciate the necessity for it, to urge its provision, and to insist on the feasibility of its construction were, in fact, soldiers. This point is emphasized, not because it is either remarkable or praiseworthy on the part of any men that they should be the first to realize the need for an obvious development connected with their own profession, but in justice to those who can neither make speeches nor write to the Press to defend themselves against misstatements, even when publicly made. Moreover, those soldiers who gave the impulse for this innovation did so without any knowledge of Mr. Wells's brilliant forecast written in 1903. No disparagement or depreciation of others is intended by this statement of fact.

So far as the writer is aware, the first definite proposal for a fighting machine on the lines of the existing Tank was due to the appearance of the Hornsby-Ackroyd caterpillar tractor, which was tested for military traction purposes in England in 1906-1908. It was made by a military officer and was carried up to the stage of the preparation of sketch drawings, when the project died for want of support. Like Mr. Wells, he was ahead of his time.

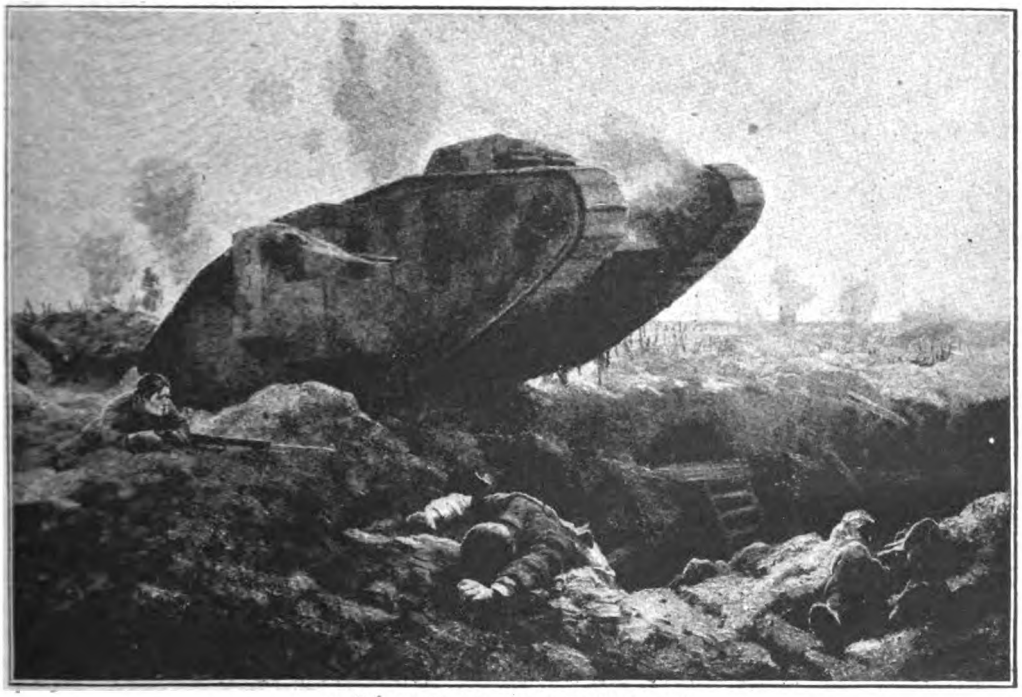
Independently, without knowledge on their part of the previous abortive effort, a similar idea took shape in the minds of some other soldiers at the very beginning of the war, and it will specially interest the readers of this magazine to learn that it was on this occasion inspired by an invention from the country in which new ideas are supposed always to be welcome. In July, 1914, it became known that there was in existence an automobile for agricultural purposes, propelled on the caterpillar principle, which was possessed of quite unusual powers of crossing rough ground and traversing obstacles. This was the Holt tractor, made in Peoria, Illinois, U.S.A. The accounts of the performances of this machine, constructed for haulage and not specially for climbing, suggested that one similarly designed especially to travel across country would, except in speed, have all the value of the existing armoured motor-cars without their limitations.

The immediate incentive to action on the part of those responsible for the Tank "movement," therefore, was the fact that the construction of such a machine at last seemed to be a practical proposition. Even its most ardent backers, however, did not then fully realize how great the need for it was. The war had not lasted long, however, before this was made abundantly clear.

With their proverbial thoroughness, the Germans had not only studied the Russo-Japanese War, but had turned their studies to good account. One of the outstanding lessons of that struggle was the great value of machine-guns on the defensive, especially exemplified in the battle of San-de-pu and at Port Arthur. And, in preparation for the conflict they had good reason to know was coming, the Germans had, either in accord-

* M. Albert Robida, both in his writings and pictures in *La Caricature*, predicted the use of Tanks in 1883. [STRAND MAGAZINE, June, 1917.]

ance with the deductions made or as a result of their own experiments, secretly provided themselves with thousands of these weapons, and trained a large body of picked troops to man them. It is stated that the total number in their possession in August, 1914, amounted to some thousands. The worth of these guns was very soon proved, firstly in the attack and then in the defensive, both in delaying rearguard actions conducted by detachments and in protracted resistance carried out by their machine-guns was greatly increased. In proportion, also, as the defences, including the dug-outs and shelters for these guns, were elaborated, did the immunity of the latter from artillery fire keep pace more or less with the gradually increasing weight and number of the Allied guns. This progressive improvement of the defences continued until the machine-guns were ensconced in caverns and galleries thirty feet below ground-level during bombardment, and brought up only



A "TANK." BY JOHN HASSALL, R.I.

The picture which attracted so much attention in this year's Academy. Published by special permission of Messrs. W. Foster & Co., Wellington Foundry, Lincoln.

large forces. Every offensive undertaken by the Allies on the Aisne and afterwards bore witness, in the toll of baulked assaults and infantry losses, to the stopping power of these weapons and justified the astuteness of the enemy General Staff. Each attack also showed their comparative invulnerability—even in hastily-constructed defences, to the artillery which was available against them. Indeed, it may be said that the murderous power of the machine-gun when used lavishly and with skill—and the Germans are artists in handling it—came as a revelation to their enemies.

As time went on, as the operations assumed the character of siege warfare, and as the Germans had time to erect miles of barbed wire and other obstacles, the effectiveness of at the last moment for a point-blank *battue* of the attacking infantry.

But long before the latter stage was reached it had been brought home to the protagonists of the Tank that they were right. It became increasingly obvious that to launch assaults against the defence as organized by the enemy, unless the positions were first blown to dust, was merely to throw the infantry into a maze of barbed wire, in which they would be caught helpless as flies on "Tanglefoot" and mown down by rifle or machine-gun fire at short range poured in from different directions; or, if they were successful in getting over the wire into a trench, to subject them to enfilade fire from the same weapons placed for that object. It was established that, at all events until the British artillery

increased in strength to a degree that would enable it effectively to cut the entanglements on the front of assault and blast the defences into shapeless mounds, it was essential to employ some moving bullet-proof device which could not only climb forward and forge its way through uncut wire, but could knock out machine-guns in a straight fight. The offensive side of the projected machine then assumed greater importance; and it was realized that the Tank should primarily be a machine-gun destroyer.

If it be asked, therefore, what single factor was most instrumental in forcing the Tank into being, it can be said that it was the logical exploitation by the Germans of the machine-gun, usually the Maxim, probably the most efficient wholesale weapon of destruction ever created.

There is an English proverb which commends as a cure "a hair of the dog that bit you." And it is an interesting fact, though hardly a coincidence, if national inventive characteristics be borne in mind, that one of the most deadly man-killing machines, which the world owes to the genius of one American—the late Sir Hiram Maxim—should have found its antidote in a device directly inspired by the invention of a compatriot—Mr. Benjamin Holt.

A word of general description and a few more upon the functions of the Tanks. They are powerfully-engined, armed automobiles enclosed in a bullet-proof casing for the protection of their crews. Propelled on the caterpillar principle, they possess considerable powers of travelling over rough ground, both in crossing trenches, craters, and other cavities, and climbing over raised obstacles, such as parapets, can tear their way without difficulty through wire entanglements, can uproot largish trees, and can throw down the walls of ordinary dwelling-houses. Nevertheless, in spite of their elemental strength and apparent clumsiness, in the hands of skilled drivers they are as docile as trained elephants under their own mahouts.

As has been said, they are divided into males and females. The male is *par excellence* the machine-gun hunter and destroyer. He carries light, quick-firing guns capable of firing shell, and is intended to be to the machine-gun what the torpedo-boat destroyer was designed to be to the torpedo-boat, or the ladybird is supposed to be to the aphis. The female, which, in accordance with the laws of Nature, is the man-killer, carries nothing but machine-guns for employment against the enemy *personnel*. Her special *rôle* is to keep down hostile rifle-fire, to beat back counter-attacks and rushes of infantry, and to act generally as a consort to her lord and master.

Both sexes, however, are heavy-weights endowed with great brute force, and share in common the attribute of being able to roll out and flatten machine-guns and their emplacements. Both, therefore, act as protectors to infantry, insomuch as they can destroy or "blanket" the one thing which has, so far, proved its greatest bugbear in the attack. Moreover, every Tank that goes forward, whether actually moving or disabled, assists the infantry near it in another way. It bulks above them and is the centre of attraction. It acts as a magnet for the bullets of the hostile machine-guns, and collects them to itself as Arnold von Winkelried is supposed in 1386 to have drawn to his own body the spears of the Austrians at the battle of Sempach. Every bullet that clangs against its steel sides is one less aimed at the infantry. Each silvery star splashed on its hide is the signature of one that has not drilled its way through the body of an infantry soldier.

To be the nurse, protector, and backer of the attacking infantry, who, in the vernacular, "always get it in the neck," was the *motif* underlying the action of the new arm. As it was expressed in the exhortation given to the officers and men going forth to take their machines into battle for the first time, whatever mistakes might be made, whatever mischances might befall, if the Tanks gave reason for their comrades on foot to thank God for their presence, they would have justified their existence.

It has been justified.

It is true that in any consideration of their employment too much importance must not be attached to some of the results of their first appearance, for certain influences then came into play which can never again have quite the same effect. Against the Germans they had all the advantages of being a surprise, and by their strangeness and the apparently irresistible nature of their advance inspired terror. On our own infantry, on the other hand, their almost equally unexpected *début*, and their abnormality, had quite the contrary effect. It was a relaxation of tension, and a reaction which had its own particular value. The very grotesqueness of the machines, their ungainly, indescribable method of progress, their colouring—surpassing in weirdness the sickest fancies of the most rabid Cubist—were in reality great

moral assets. They supplied the touch of comic relief, and excited the mirth of the British soldier, always blessed with a keen sense of the ridiculous. They acted as an antidote to the effect of the "Jack Johnsons," "Weary Willies," "Silent Susies," "Whizz Bangs," "Sausages," "Rum Jars," tear shells, gas shells, and all the other frightfulnesses of the unspeakable Boche. They counteracted the weariness, the hunger and thirst, the dust, the mud, and all the squalor and filthy discomfort of war. As has been related in the accounts published at the time, it was a laughing, cheering crowd of infantry which in many cases followed the Tanks forward on September 15th. On the other hand, the new engines underwent their baptism of fire, and there were failures due to this which should not recur.

Some of these results were produced by the factor of novelty, and are already discounted. But the solid material value of the Tanks to the infantry remains.

Mr. Frederick Palmer, the celebrated American war correspondent with the British Army, has estimated that in the latter stages of the battle of the Somme the intervention of the Tanks—though many machines failed from mechanical and other defects—saved some twenty thousand British lives, and subsequent estimates of the quality of the assistance rendered by them during May, 1917, are similar. But the most convincing proof of the difference made by their intervention is ocular, and is afforded by the "pattern" of the field of battle over which a British attack has passed. Where Tanks have accompanied the advance, and have been able to eat up the enemy machine-guns left over by our bombardment, the bodies of our infantry strew No Man's Land irregularly, here and there. Where Tanks have not been used, in some places the bodies can be seen to be lying in front of the enemy's machine-gun "nests" and strong points in swathes like cut corn—in a series of high-water marks showing where the successive waves of the assault have met and been petrified by the death-dealing spray of the German Maxims.

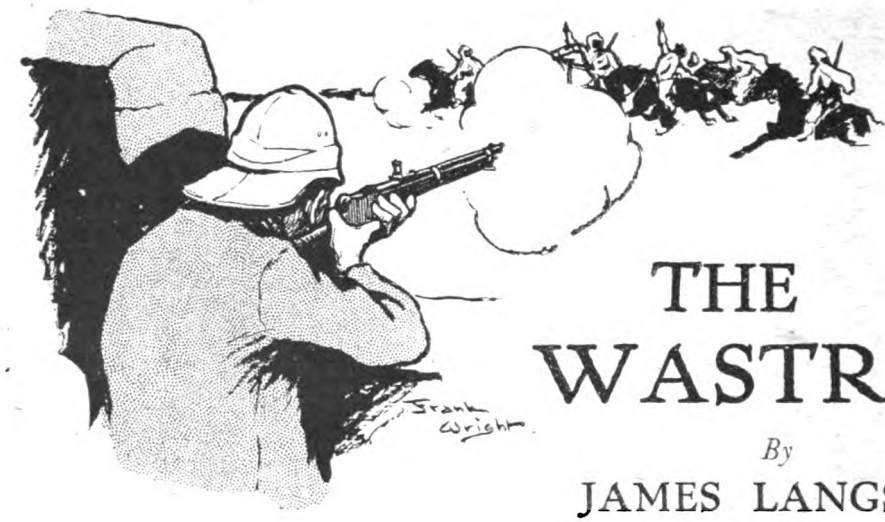
And not only have the Tanks saved life by the moral effect of their approach and the number of machine-guns put out of action; they have themselves taken an active part in killing, on some occasions, indeed, having played the leading *rôle* in what might be called a "Butcher's Dream."

That the Germans appreciate the significance of the new development is clear from the instructions issued, and the elaborate protective measures taken by them. And in spite of the ridicule usually poured on the new weapon by their newspapers—the object of which is plain—articles do occasionally appear which sound another note. For instance, Lieutenant-General Baron von Ardenne has recently stated in the *Berliner Tageblatt* that:—

"These powerful armoured cars, which were first used by the British, are undoubtedly the most wonderful weapons which modern tactics have revealed in warfare. . . ."

But the purpose of this account is neither to glorify nor to justify the Tanks; its object is merely to impart a little information which may be of interest to those afar off who have not been in a position to obtain it.

This—the latest engine of war—of course, has its limitations. For instance, Tanks alone, in their present state of development, cannot push matters to a decision, nor win a great action. That must still be done, as in the past, by the infantry—the "Queen of Battles." But "Behemoth," clad in his bullet-proof skin, and urged onward by the power of scores of horses, laughs at entanglements, whilst machine-guns are his "meat." His main object cannot be too often or too strongly emphasized; other, ancillary, duties need not be specified here. To the infantry soldier attempting to force his way by his own puny strength through mud or dust and groves of barbed wire, his body naked to every kind of missile, but more especially to the sleet of lead which whistles horizontally across No Man's Land, he is the mechanical big brother armed with the punch and the big stick.



THE WASTREL.

By

JAMES LANGSTON.

Illustrated by Frank Wright.

IN a hundred towns along the upper waters of the Euphrates was sounding the steady lu-lu-lu of fanatical hordes slaughtering Christians. The Kurds were abroad, with battle-cries of Islam on their lips and the mercy of tigers in their hearts. The Turkish soldiery looked on stolidly at the butchery, sometimes helping it, though vowing with much talk that they were out for the defence. The Armenians simply died, as is their way, sometimes by tens, sometimes by thousands.

At the mission station five miles from Harput some Christians of a different type were gathered—fighting Christians, who knew the uses of soap and gunpowder, and had a flag worth talking about to protect them, a flag known as the Union Jack, that has been heard of in the world. Still, this flag was far away and the Kurds were near.

There were men here and women, sheltered in a stone house with a stone wall around it, built by Presbyterians to show people who wear turbans how people who wear pot-hats do such things as preaching and decimal fractions. The women in the house were sure there was no danger; the men, excepting Professor Peabody, knew they would be lucky if they were not massacred to the last mother's child.

Gathered here in this mission station, and well content to have the stone wall around them and shooting tackle within, were some twenty-five souls, six of them English, the rest natives of one breed or another. There were half-a-dozen students from the college, now a pile of smouldering ruins in Harput, earnest-eyed young men, who had fled from death with their Bibles and flowing trousers and their small black fezes. There were some Armenian girls and women, beautiful, submissive creatures, born to be bought and sold, to suffer and die. There were three ladies, two of them teachers from Constantinople, and one the wife of Father Asdadur, as he was called, the finest old missionary in all Asia Minor, and in charge of the station. Then there were two newly-arrived missionaries, one with his bride, who had come from England in service of the Mission, and were pushing on to the East and wondering how far they would get. Finally, there was a man from Chicago, who told "funny" stories and had great enterprise. He was a rug merchant who had journeyed inland for bargains in Daghestans and Cashmeres, and heartily wished he had stuck to the seaport bazaars.

Beyond doubt, the most learned member of this handful of Christians, and yet the most unwise, was Professor Walter Sheffield Peabody (to give him all his names), a very famous man, whom Cambridge University had sent out to oversee some archæological excavations in the valley of the Euphrates. This they had done because Professor Peabody understood archæology as well as sociology, and Greek, and many other things. Indeed, he was a bright particular star, one of those

men who are irritatingly brilliant. He had a wonderful memory, he was a wonderful whist player, he was a wonderful conversationalist; in fact, he was fitted for nearly everything except dealing with Xeibeck chieftains, who, between you and me, care no more for a learned lion than they do for a Persian cat. The Professor's folly had come on this very morning, when he had fired a rifle-shot at a group of horsemen passing in the distance. To understand why he did this takes us back to the week before, when the company inside the mission walls had defended themselves as best they could, and fortunately with success, against some Kurdish stragglers who had conceived it a pleasant pastime to loot the place and kill the people in it, at least the men. And in this skirmish the versatile Professor had come off less gloriously than was his wont; indeed, to tell plain truth, when he heard the bullets pattering about and the cries of the marauders, he had gone back into one of the inner rooms—and stayed there.

Fortunately, the affair had turned out all right, thanks mainly to the lion fighting of young Eli Morris, a *protégé* of Peabody's and a notable in his own way at Cambridge, where it was said that no man had ever passed him on the football field, and no man had ever failed to pass him in the classroom. Eli was on this archæological business because his father, who was rich, thought that a year or so abroad with Professor Peabody would do the boy worlds of good and incidentally keep him out of mischief. Not that Eli needed watching, for a finer fellow than he never took a degree and marvelled when he got it. And no dog ever loved its master better than he loved the Professor; there was something pathetic in his attitude of humility toward this resplendent man of learning, in whom he saw everything that was good and great, while he—well, he was only Eli Morris. Yet, in this business with the Kurds the Professor had been unmistakably nervous, while Eli was down at the gate treating the screaming devils as if they were some scratch eleven trying to score against the 'Varsity.

And the memory of this rankled in Peabody's mind, for he had the habit of excelling all men in all things, and it was bitter to his self-esteem to see a man who had been dropped through two or three classes outshine him in a time of crisis. So, on this day, when he espied some horsemen passing in the distance, he picked up his rifle very quietly and, before anyone could stop him, fired a chance shot at long range. He would show these people that he was on the alert for danger, and, if he happened to hit anyone—why, so much the better. This might not have been such a bad idea, at least no harm would have come of it, if the horsemen had been Kurds, as the Professor supposed. But it chanced that they were a Xeibeck band, the fiercest and most lawless tribe in all Kurdistan, and they cared neither for God nor Sultan, and boasted that they cut down Mussulmans and Christians with equal delight. This was the target Professor Peabody had chosen for the display of his marksmanship and the bolstering up of his pride.

"You don't think you hit anyone, do you, Professor?" asked Father Asdadur, anxiously.

"I don't know," answered the Professor; "I adjusted my sight very carefully, and am usually a fair judge of distance." He spoke as if his skill of the hand was alone in question, and took the same tone he would have used in arguing about a cut-stroke in tennis. "If we must fight anyhow, we may as well take the aggressive," he continued; but he did not exactly mean this, he simply objected to the old missionary's manner. The old missionary, however, had lived along the upper waters of the Euphrates for over fifteen years. He had seen Xeibecks before.

"God help us," he muttered, "if he did hit one of them!"

All through the afternoon stragglers reached the station, the weak flying from the strong, and some of them were wounded, and all brought tales of horror—of houses burned, of stores pillaged, of people killed and outraged. About sundown there came to the house a messenger, a huge, bearded man, with cunning squint eyes set in the face of a patriarch, and he talked for awhile to Father Asdadur in a sing-song voice, and then went away. When the missionary came in his face looked graver than usual, and he took Morris aside and told him that which made him look grave, too.

"We will call the men together after dinner," said Father Asdadur, "and give them the sheikh's message."

"Wait till the evening's over," said Eli; "the ladies have arranged some games and things."

Meanwhile Professor Peabody was pointing out to the ladies, in his happiest way, the picturesque points in the messenger's costume—his gaudily-embroidered garment of skin, his knotted turban, his queer leggings and trousers—and was arguing with the rug-man as to whether he was a Kurd or not.

"Was that fellow a Kurd, Father Asdadur?" he asked, when the man had gone.

"No, he was a Xeibeck."

"There, I was sure of it. You see, I have made a careful study of these tribal characteristics."

The evening passed delightfully, so the ladies declared, and Professor Peabody was the soul of the occasion. He was charming in serious talk, forceful in argument, abundant in epigram and clever *mots*, and even condescended to old-fashioned conundrums for the delectation of the Constantinople teachers, who had never heard a ramrod described as "my first is a kind of butter, my second a kind of liquor, and my whole a part of a gun," and other brilliant riddles of the sort. And then they sang college songs and plantation melodies, and one of the ladies made much fun of Eli's bass, which, she declared, invariably went up when it should have gone down, and *vice versa*. Indeed, Eli made a poor enough showing except when the Professor got him to tell how, when he was playing right-forward, he bucked his way through the whole line, sixty yards for a touch-down, thus saving the game. But the story was half spoiled in the telling, for he jumbled it all together and failed to make impressive pauses, as good story-tellers do. The Professor would have been much better—at telling the story.

"What a pity Mr. Morris hasn't more brains!" whispered one of the teachers to Professor Peabody.

"He has a good heart!" said the Professor, complacently.

"And he is so handsome and brave, isn't he?"

"Ye-es, I suppose he is," said Peabody, less complacent now.

After it was all over and the ladies had rustled away to bed, Father Asdadur brought the men together around a table on which were things to smoke. Then he announced very quietly that the Xeibeck sheikh had sent word that his band would attack the mission station at sunrise unless a white Christian, one of their number, be delivered over to be shot.

At this there were exclamations from all the men except Morris, who, as he knew it all beforehand, merely sat still with his long legs crossed, and puffed away at his pipe.

"This is an outrage, it is infamous!" said Professor Peabody, and was launching into a pretty speech when the old missionary interrupted:—

"This is a country, sir, of outrages and infamy."

"But we are British citizens; the Sultan must protect us."

"The Sultan is powerless, and four days' marching could scarcely bring troops here. The Xeibecks will be at our gates when the sun comes up; they keep their appointments."

"But there must be some way of reasoning with this sheikh; we can make it worth his while; let him name a ransom."

Father Asdadur shook his head. "You do not know the Xeibecks. They come out of the mountains east of Smyrna, they live on bread and olives, they sleep in black tents. What would they do with your ransom? They want but one thing, blood for blood. One of their men was killed by one of our bullets; they insist that one of our men shall be killed by one of theirs."

All eyes were fixed on the Professor, who stirred uneasily.

"Gentlemen," said he, after a troubled pause, "I suppose I am responsible for this catastrophe. I probably fired the shot——"

"Not so sure about that," put in Morris. "I popped away at our friends two or three times myself this afternoon."

Every man in the room, with one possible exception, felt that this statement was false, and knew also why Morris had made it. Perhaps the Professor thought it was true; at any rate, he made no sign. "Yes," went on Eli, in a matter-of-fact tone, "I thought maybe it would scare 'em away to see we were not afraid."

"Exactly my idea," said the Professor. "Why can't we defend ourselves the way we—way we—did the other day?"

The Professor flushed as he remembered that other day.

"My friends," said Father Asdadur, with deep impressiveness, "I've lived in this region a long time, and understand its ways. In my time I have seen massacres. I saw Heghgate burned, and the butcheries of Erzerûm. My mother and my two sisters were killed at Hedink, my uncle and four cousins were killed at Trebizond. I know what I am talking of. The Xeibecks are the fiercest fighters in Syria, and they outnumber us ten to one. We might hold out against them an hour or two, not longer. After that you know what will happen." He glanced toward the stairway, whence the sound of laughter and women's talk floated down. Each man looked his neighbour in the eyes; they understood.

"This is horrible!" exclaimed one of the younger missionaries, a pale-faced graduate of a theological college, who had come out only the year before. His wife was one of the women upstairs.

"See here," said Morris, abruptly, putting

"ONE CARD,' SAID THE PROFESSOR."

down his pipe, "there's no use trying to dodge this thing; there are twenty-five people here to be saved, and one of us six has got to do it." There was such conviction in his tone that the others felt the uselessness of further talk; even Professor Peabody was silent.

It is an interesting time when six men sit down together to agree calmly which one of them shall stop living. It was now one o'clock in the morning, the sun rose at five; they had four hours in which to decide. One of them had four hours to live.

"Do you all accept the sheikh's terms?" asked Father Asdadur, after a long pause.

One after another the men accepted.

"Then I propose that we make the choice by lot."

There was another long silence.

"Gentlemen," said Morris, blowing out clouds of smoke, "I've been thinking of something. I believe I know why I was sent to this God-forsaken country. I never did know until now. I think I'm the man to meet these beggars in the morning. I don't see any sense in drawing lots. Look at it sensibly, now; you five men are all doing something worth while, helping somebody, making the world better. I've never done a thing except give the governor trouble, and blow in his money, and get dropped and suspended, and get myself laughed at, and—and" (with a gulp) "kick a football a little. Besides that, you're married men with families, but it doesn't matter a hang about me. So you'll please consider me nominated for this business in the morning."

It is doubtful if, in all his life, Eli had ever made so long a speech as this; it is certain he had never made such an impression. Father Asdadur reached across the table and clasped the young man's strong white hand in his brown bony one. "God bless you, my son," he said; "you have a brave heart, but the thing is impossible, quite impossible."

And all the others said it was impossible, too. What else could they say? So they came back to the lot-drawing idea, and the rug-man proposed that cards should point the finger of fate.

"I never played cards in my life," said Father Asdadur.

"Neither did I," said one of the missionaries, but the other admitted having learned poker in his young manhood.

"Let it be poker, then," said the rug-man. "I'll show you in a jiffy. Look here, I deal you each five cards, like that." He produced a pack of cards from somewhere and began to shuffle them. "Understand, you have the privilege of drawing once, and the lowest hand loses."

Then, with the cards lying face upward on the table, he explained to the two beginners the value of a pair, two pairs, three of a kind, and so on—the ordinary hands of draw-poker. The others looked on indifferently; after all, as well a choice by cards as any other means. When the two missionaries had learned their lesson, the man from Chicago said:—

"Now, if you've got that in your heads, we will play in earnest. First jack deals."

And he dealt until a jack fell before Father Asdadur.

"Shall we let one deal settle it?" asked Morris.

"Why not have it this way," suggested the Professor, never lacking in a happy suggestion; "why not let the highest man drop out after each deal and leave the others to fight it out? Then the choice will come between the two left in at the last."

This modification was agreed to, and Father Asdadur dealt the first hand, dealt it in silence, and his very clumsiness added to the tension. The six men studied their cards, threw down their discards, called for the number they wanted, and then declared what they had. It was absolute chance disposing of a life. The man from Chicago had three kings, and went out; he was safe. In the next round, Father Asdadur found fortune and went out in his turn. Then one after another the young missionaries held the highest hand, and so escaped the danger. The last hand came between Morris and Professor Peabody. Morris dealt.

"One card," said the Professor, and his lips were dry.

"I'll take one," said Morris.

Both men discarded a single card, picked up a single card, and then slowly looked at it.

"Aces up," said the Professor.

"I drew for a flush," said Morris, with a huskiness in his voice, "and—I didn't fill."

He threw down his cards, and for a moment no one spoke.

"It's all right," said Eli, "fate understands these things. I told you I was the man to go."

That broke the spell, and the others crowded about him with show of sympathy. No doubt they were sorry for him; no doubt they were not sorry for themselves. How do men feel on a raft when one of their number has been chosen to go overboard to save the rest? That's the way they felt. No one could sleep and no one tried to sleep. The rug-man from Chicago paced up and down in front of the house, the assistant missionaries talked together in low tones on the veranda, and Professor Peabody gave Father Asdadur some meaty ideas on the proper way to deal with the heathen. Morris wrote letters to his family and one to a girl.

About half an hour before sunrise sounds from the upper regions warned them that the ladies were dressing. There was some excursion planning, no doubt, and their laughter and gay talk showed that they were in the best of humours.

"Halloa!" said Morris, "we shall have the women-folk down here in a minute," and then, going quickly to the others, he charged them on no account to let the ladies know. "I'm glad they're coming down, though," he said to himself; "it's good to have a girl or two around."

A little later there was an invasion from above, the ladies fresh in their cool morning gowns, and some of them pretty. Coffee was served with a light meal.

Suddenly there came the sound of marching feet outside. A hoarse command rang out and gun-butts grounded on the gravel. The ladies rushed to the window.

"It's some of those horrid Kurds!" cried one.

Then the ladies joined in laughing at the queer uniforms and the ugly faces. Morris, meantime, unobserved, had shaken hands with the other men.

Father Asdadur rose hastily and went to the front of the house. As he went out Eli exchanged glances with him.

"You ladies stay here," he said; "I'll go and see what it is."

The other men followed after and stood about awkwardly. The sheikh came forward with a fine dignity of presence and said something in his native tongue. Father Asdadur replied, and then there was parleying.

"Make them understand," said Professor Peabody, "that I represent one of the greatest institutions in the United Kingdom, and can promise them anything they desire."

"The sheikh says that he has never heard of the United Kingdom," said Father Asdadur, translating. "He says he has given his terms and has come for an answer."

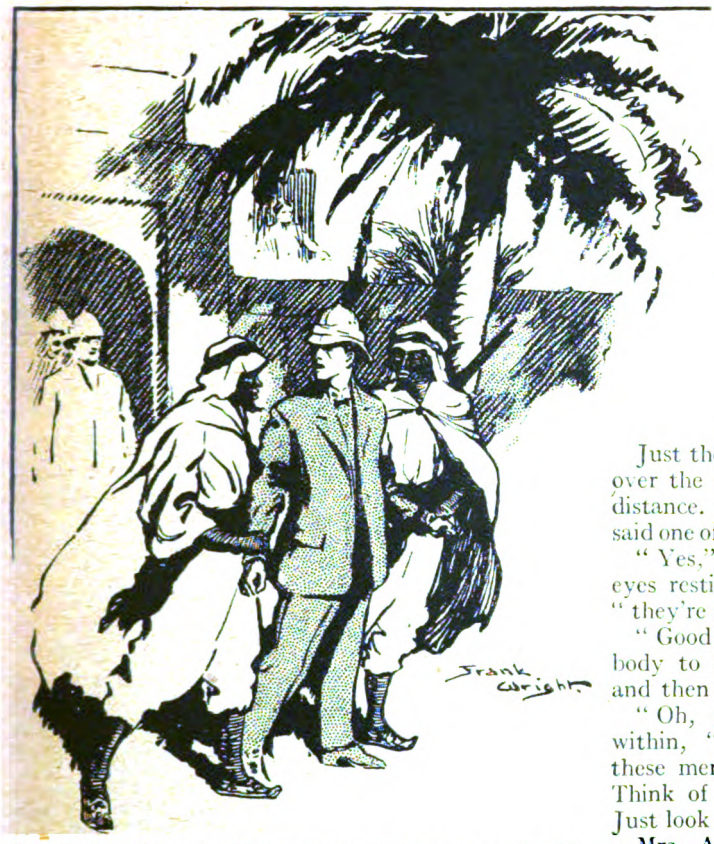
"But tell him, for God's sake, make him understand, that this young man comes of fine family, that his father is very rich, that—that—that he has been entrusted to my keeping."

"The sheikh says that the young man of their band who was killed from here had a father and mother, too."

"Don't bother about it any more," said Eli, touching the Professor's arm; "it isn't much, anyhow." And he stepped forward with just the same unflinching look in his eyes he had shown in the old days when summoned before the Dean."

"But," cried the Professor, stepping forward, "who can positively say that the bullet which killed this poor warrior came from here?

The sheikh opened a leathern pouch and drew something from it, which he handed to Father Asdadur, who explained.



"WHY, THEY'RE LEADING HIM OFF LIKE A PRISONER!"

"The sheikh presents you the bullet with his compliments, and says that it comes from a rifle the like of which does not exist in all Kurdistan. He speaks the truth. This is a bullet from a Martini rifle; yours is the only rifle it could come from." Then he added, very slowly: "I congratulate you, Professor, on your marksmanship."

By this time the Xeibecks were plainly growing impatient and motioned that they would wait no longer.

"Good-bye, Professor," said Eli, head high but eyes saying things. Then hesitating: "You know it's all—all—for dear old England," and he gripped the Professor's well-shaped hand in an athlete's squeeze.

"Where are you going, Mr. Morris?" asked one of the girls from one of the windows.

"Oh, just to see these fellows do some musket practice," said Eli, lightly.

"Look!" exclaimed another, "they're taking him by the arms! Why, they're leading him off like a prisoner!"

"Don't be alarmed," called Eli, "it's just a joke."

As the sun came over the hills, lighting up the glories of the Euphrates valley, this little company of Christians, far from their homes, stood on the piazza and watched the departing group. The Xeibeck band marched slowly up the slope, until the last thing seen of Eli was his figure outlined on the hilltop in the red sunshine.

"Why, how queer you men look!" said the wife of the young missonary. "What's the matter?"

Just then the sound of shots came over the hill and echoed away in the distance. "They're shooting already," said one of the Constantinople teachers.

"Yes," said Father Asdadur, his eyes resting tenderly on the hilltop, "they're shooting."

"Good God," said Professor Peabody to himself, "this is awful!" and then he told the truth.

"Oh, girls," came a voice from within, "look here! I do believe these men have been playing poker! Think of that at a mission station! Just look at this table!"

Mrs. Asdadur was speaking, and the ladies hurried to her call. The men followed after them.

"This is a good hand, isn't it, Professor?" she said, picking up five cards that lay on top of the others. Rather absently Professor Peabody looked over her shoulder, then started back, with knitted brows. The cards lay on the table just as they had been thrown down after that last fateful deal. He picked up the five cards lying next. It was his hand: two aces, two eights, and a jack—no danger of his forgetting that.

Turning to the other men, he said: "Morris drew for a flush, didn't he?"

"Yes, poor chap," said the rug-man. "Don't you remember he threw down when he didn't fill?"

"I remember," said the Professor, and was silent for a full half-minute, his face becoming very white. Then he said, with a look in his eyes no one had ever seen there, "Gentlemen, this is Morris's hand. *He did fill!*"

And at that moment Professor Walter Sheffield Peabody (to give him all his names again) understood that Cambridge University had turned out a bigger man than he.

"LION-KINGS."

The Romance of the Pezon Family, the Chief Originators of Modern Animal-Training.

EDMOND PEZON, the popular tamer, has just died, and the French papers have been full of stories of the Pezon family, whose many members during the last sixty years have travelled all over France. The tale of their adventures is the history of the art of wild beast training, and as that art is on the point of dying out, a brief account of this celebrated family will prove of timely interest. The great majority of tamers who have become famous have been pupils of the Pezons.

In 1823 a young farmer, named Pierre Pezon, returned to his native village, after having fought in Napoleon's last campaigns, settled down, married, and in due course welcomed his first-born son, Baptiste. In the succeeding years four other sons were born: Alexandre, Jean, Justin, and Théodore—the youngest—born in 1840.

In those long-ago times life was hard. The bitter winters drove hordes of famishing wolves from the heights down towards the villages. The land was poor, and long daily labour hardly produced a sufficiency for the family. Baptiste was just eighteen, a fine young fellow, thick-set and sturdy.

One day Baptiste quitted the paternal roof, a little bundle in his hand and a few francs in his pocket. This was the beginning of his tour of France which was destined to last for fifty years, to the day of his death.

Five hundred yards along the road a picturesque group preceded him: four men leading two Pyrenese bears, great fawn-coloured beasts with black paws, who tugged on the chain fastened to their muzzle by a solid ring. In a few minutes Baptiste had caught them up, and entered into conversation with the Romanies, and finally arranged to join their caravan.

The exhibition was not at all a bad business. Barely three years after his departure Baptiste was joined by his brother Jean. This latter threw himself so whole-heartedly into his new calling that he was nicknamed Jean de l'Ours (Jean of the Bear), a name which stuck to him through his whole career.

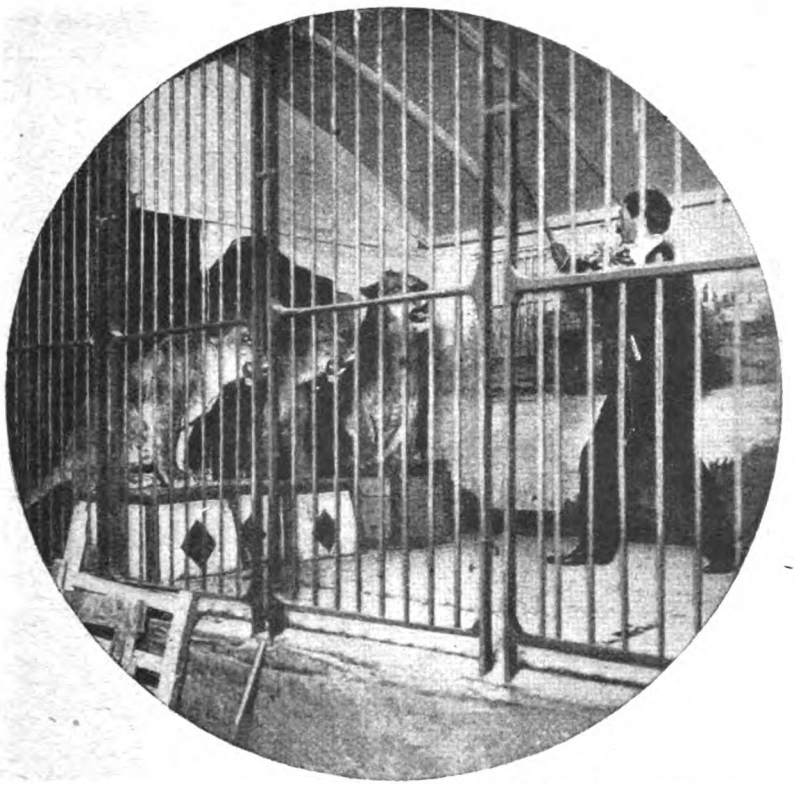
Little by little the brothers extended their enterprise. From simple exhibitors of performing bears they became the owners of shows. Their brothers, with one exception, joined them: Jean, Justin, and Théodore all became celebrated tamers.

But Baptiste Pezon had no intention of resting on his laurels. He had tamed bears. Now he would tame lions. He carried out his purpose,

BAPTISTE PEZON AND HIS TIGERS—TOM AND MITCH.

and put his dangerous pupils through their evolutions before the eager eyes of the crowd, to whom such a spectacle was still new and strange.

After their first start the four brothers separated, and each followed his own perambulating career with varying success. But of the four, the one who stands out most vividly, gripping the memory and imagination of the crowd, is Baptiste—the first who "went on tour," the one who had "the longest run."



EDMOND PEZON PUTTING HIS LIONS, D'ARTAGNAN, LOLOTTE, AND SAÏDA, THROUGH THEIR PACES.

Many Parisians can still recall the well-known figure of "Père Baptiste" with his leonine profile framed in its short frizzy beard. With his sparkling eyes, and long hair floating over his shoulders like a mane, he was part and parcel of Paris. From 1874 to 1897 Pezon was one of the kings of Parisian travelling shows.

His method of training was the direct opposite to that of his contemporary, Bidel. No lashings with a whip, very little firing of pistols or rockets, to dazzle and confuse the wild things by their unexpected flash. Pezon's entry into Brutus's cage was like the meeting of a kindly master with a friendly tabby-cat after a short separation.

Pezon's motto was: "It's all done by kindness"; while Bidel would say: "Terrify the brutes."

It is quite a mistake to suppose that the training of animals by kindness is a recent innovation of German and American managers. Long before Hagenbeck, who claims to be the pioneer of training by kindness, numerous animal tamers never employed violent or cruel methods with their pupils. Pezon was one of these.

To see the Pezons at their work we must go back a quarter of a century. It is in the good old days of Neuilly Fair. On a lovely sunny afternoon in June we will walk down the long avenue which runs from the Port Maillot to the Seine.

At last we come to the Avenue de Madrid, and the place reserved for menageries. Among these latter, the Ménagerie Lozérienne is easily recognizable by the pale yellow paint of its woodwork and its immense length: quite eighty-five yards. On the parade, standing beside old Baptiste in his flannel shirt, red sash, and high boots, stands a young fellow of about twenty, utterly devoid of pose or arrogance, but wearing with extreme elegance the traditional Hungarian dolman. This is Adrien, the son of the founder of the menagerie.

A bell announces the beginning of the performance. Inside the menagerie are ten travelling cages surrounding a large central cage, whose back panels are painted to represent a desert landscape; in the cages is a superb collection of wild beasts. Nearly thirty lions, lionesses, and cubs, born in the menagerie (for Baptiste was a past-master in the breeding and rearing of felines), three tigers, a dozen panthers and pumas, many bears, and some hyenas and wolves, altogether some sixty beasts, not counting the monkeys, serpents, llamas, dromedaries, and other less imposing creatures.

The notes of a lively march draw the visitors towards the central cage.

Old Baptiste—he is nearly seventy—enters the cage with the ease and authority gained in forty or more years' experience. Calm and smiling, he bows to his beloved public, and then the first pupil is introduced. It is a white Polar bear.

An old comrade this. He is nearly thirty years old, and for a quarter of a century he and Pezon have been the best of friends. Polaire

BAPTISTE PEZON, WITH THE BEAR "GROOM" WHICH SERIOUSLY WOUNDED HIM.

jumps over a low barrier two or three times, receives a lump of sugar, and withdraws, after casting a knowing look at his master—almost a wink. He has thoroughly earned his mess of bread and cod-liver oil!

Another bear, this time more formidable. It is Groom, the huge Russian animal who was the cause of the first serious accident in Pezon's long career. Contrary to the general belief, the brown bear is, as a rule, much more ferocious than the white. There are very few tamers who would dare to anger a male of this species of over six years old. Groom cannot measure less than eight feet eight inches when he rears himself on his hind legs. His cunning eye is not reassuring, and his vicious, snarling growl plainly indicates that it would be dangerous to vex him. It is with this redoubtable beast that old Baptiste best displays his unshakable will and irresistible domination. Twice has Groom wounded his master, but Pezon cannot make up his mind to give up exhibiting him.

Pezon makes this great beast beg, reared up to its full height on its hind legs, but he keeps a vigilant watch on its menacing jaws and threatening forepaws. Thoroughly to appreciate the difficulty and danger of this work it must be understood that Groom is neither muzzled nor has he a nose-ring.

And now comes the moment of the sensational meeting of Pezon and Brutus, the enormous Atlas lion that Bartholdi used as a model for his "Lion de Belfort." Not content with having his favourite immortalized by the famous sculptor, Baptiste insisted upon having an exact reproduction placed on the family vault which he had built in Père-Lachaise. To-day visitors to the cemetery can admire the effigy of Brutus, who seems to stand guard, a calm and majestic sentinel, over the ashes of his ancient master.

A giant among lions, Brutus makes his entrance and immediately goes and fawns upon the tamer. Pezon affectionately pets the great lion, who lies down at his feet. He shows the crowd the animal's formidable claws, pushed from their horny sheaths. Then, opening the immense mouth, with fangs like daggers, he puts his head between the mighty jaws. A shiver of terror—but only for a moment, for the lion remains quiet and gentle. Then, rising, Pezon bestrides the curious steed and rides him two or three times round the cage, finally guiding Brutus to his own particular den.

The main feature of Baptiste Pezon's method may be gathered from this brief account: getting his animals so accustomed to his presence that a superficial observer might well think there was nothing easier than to go among these inmates of the Ménagerie Lozérienne. But those in the business know what an amount of patient observation, unfailing sang-froid, and patience is necessary for the achievement of these splendid results. Even when born in captivity the beasts have to be approached with caution, for, as Bidel said: "Anyone can enter the central cage; the thing is to come out again!"

Even with the gentlest beast a sudden hark back to atavistic ferocity is always to be feared. The tamer has to be unceasingly on his guard.

This very thing was the cause of Baptiste Pezon's accident at Châlons-sur-Marne in 1888. The bear, Groom, had for several days appeared unlike himself. Sullen and growling, he continually sharpened his claws against the bars and sides of his cage. In spite of these disquieting signs, Baptiste Pezon refused to put off his usual entry to the cage. He was to repent this decision. Hardly had the tamer entered the cage when he was so ferociously set upon that he was unable

BAPTISTE PEZON SEATED ON HIS LION BRUTUS.

to parry the attack. Man and beast rolled in the sawdust, while a shrill cry of dread rose from among the terrified spectators. Pezon was under the bear, who was crushing him beneath his great weight. Happily, in spite of his sixty-five years, the old mountaineer was strong; he seized the beast by the throat, and forced its terrible jaws away from his face. The assistants, in an agony of apprehension, looked on helpless. Suddenly the door opened, and a youngster, a schoolboy, armed with a bayonet snatched from a soldier, entered the cage. It was Adrien, aged sixteen! He was spending his Christmas holidays at the menagerie, and in this unpremeditated but dramatic way made his *début* in the profession. The sliding door was opened from outside, and the bear, vanquished, edged out reluctantly and slowly. One can imagine the ovation that young Adrien received! This incident, too, decided Pezon to allow his son to succeed him. Up till then the old man had utterly refused his consent.

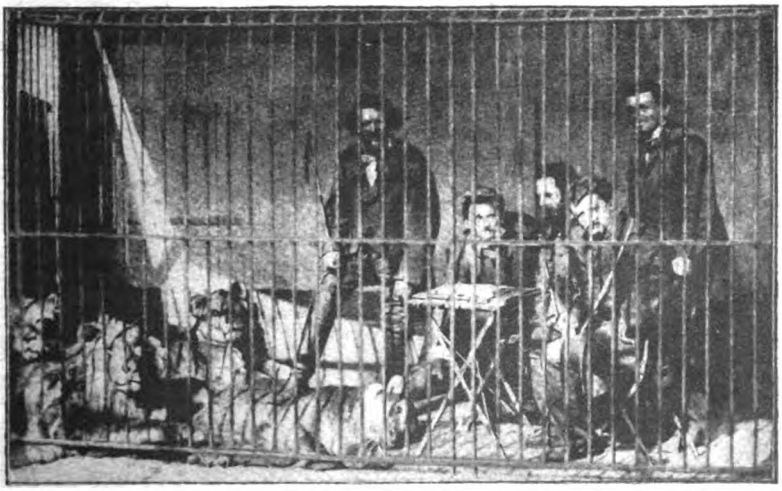
After his father's death Adrien continued to run the menagerie. Like his father, he was warmly welcomed by artists and journalists. He even gained a pupil from among the latter, M. Ernest Weill, a Parisian reporter, who, in 1885, one day gave a performance in Pezon's great cage to his *confrères* after a banquet.

Théodore Pezon, the youngest of Baptiste's brothers, had a shorter career than his senior. He was only forty when he died in 1880, as the result of the many wounds he had received in the course of his contests with the lions.

In 1888 his two sons, Alexandre and Edmond, went to Paris and established themselves on the Boulevard Richard-Lenoir in time for the *fête* of July 14th. From the beginning, in spite of the competition of Bidel's and Baptiste Pezon's big zoological establishments, these two young tamers became warm favourites with the Paris public. A very terrible occurrence was soon to give the new menagerie a quite unexpected, but nevertheless a most profitable, advertisement.

It was Sunday, September 11th, 1888. On this lovely afternoon in late summer, the brothers Pezon opened the "Goblins' Fête." Among the attractions offered to visitors was a group of six young lions of from three to four years old, still in course of instruction, which Edmond—then twenty years of age—directed in their tricks and evolutions. The day was thundery and the animals were particularly nervous. The story can best be told in Edmond's own words, as written in his memoirs.

"At the second morning performance I noticed, immediately on entering the cage, that Roland, the oldest and least tractable of



M. ERNEST WEILL, A PARISIAN REPORTER, GIVING A PERFORMANCE TO HIS CONFRÈRES IN PEZON'S GREAT CAGE.

EDMOND PEZON.

my six lions, was very nervous, and his ill-temper was more marked than usual.

"He reared himself up to his full height on his hind legs and roared every time I attempted to make him do his work. But if I was ever to do any good at this dangerous game I must win now. Cost what it might I made up my mind to force Roland to do his usual round.

"'Come on!' I cried, 'stand up!' But at each of my attempts, Roland flung himself at me and I had to fend him off with the end of the fork and drive him by main force into a corner.

"Before this terrible duel, in which neither man nor beast would yield, the crowd sat, frightened and trembling.

"From all parts of the house rang cries and exclamations:—

"'Enough! Enough! Stop!'

"'Not yet,' I cried. 'He must do as I tell him!'

"Taking no further notice of the crowd, I continued the struggle. At last I forced him to obey me! It was a real triumph and the audience broke out into vociferous applause.

"At this moment, just as the lion was returning to his place, he suddenly took a sharp turn and flung himself at me with one tremendous bound.

"Fortunately, I had not taken my eyes off him. With the help of the fork I managed to break the force of the beast's impact, calling out at the same time to an attendant:—

"'Open the door!'

"What came to the man I do not know. I did not understand then and I cannot explain it to-day. He stood stock-still, looking at me with dull, stupid eyes. Perhaps the struggle he had just witnessed had hypnotized him and he did not know where he was or what he ought to be doing. Be that as it may, he took no more notice of my second call as I shouted in an angry voice:—

"'The door! Quick! Open the door!'

"Profiting by this instant of inattention on my part, the lion renewed his attack. A little shaken and taken by surprise, I failed to put up quite as good a fight, and the beast got the handle of my fork between his formidable fangs—even now I can hear the noise of the wood scrunching in those mighty jaws.

"I was to all intents and purposes disarmed, having nothing but my whip with which to defend myself; a poor weapon, truly.

"Once more I shouted at the top of my voice: 'A fork! Hand me a fork!'

"From all sides assistants came running, but not one of them gave me a fork. They stood gaping, petrified with terror at sight of the infuriated lion.

"I had receded to the back of the cage, defending myself as best I could with my whip. Furiously the lion caught the handle between his teeth, tore it out of my hands, and ground it to matchwood, at the same time fixing his claws in my left shoulder—sharp as so many razors. I gave myself up for lost.

"Suddenly, at that vital moment when I looked Death straight in the face, an idea flashed through my brain. The inspiration saved me.

"The beast most certainly intended to bite off my head with one snap. Which hand should I use to attempt one last desperate effort?

"The right? The left? Which to sacrifice?

"The choice did not take long—there was no time! Thrusting my left hand into the brute's open mouth, I was lucky enough to be able to seize its tongue. I twisted it with all my strength. Under the formidable weight of my adversary, who had me pinned in the corner, suffocating me, and crushing me with his enormous paws, while the claws ripped into my flesh, I felt my legs beginning to give way—but I never let go of that tongue, and we both, the beast and I, rolled to the floor, which was already spattered with flecks of blood.

"It was then a hand-to-hand, or rather body-to-body, struggle; a terrible combat, where man and beast twisted, writhed, and howled.

"In spite of the fierce twisting I was giving his tongue—and this served, too, to prevent his completely closing his jaws—the lion rolled me over on the ground with his paws, just as a cat rolls a mouse. Across the cage, up and down, from right to left, splashing the panels with blood at each movement.

"It is impossible to picture the horror of the public. Cries of terror went up from all parts. Children screamed and women were carried out fainting. Some of the men present fled aghast, while others, of sterner stuff, leaped the barriers, and with blows and curses urged the menagerie attendants to do something to help me; these latter were still rooted to the

ground, motionless and distracted, not knowing what to do.

"My struggle with Roland lasted several minutes. They seemed more like centuries to me! Suddenly the five other lions leapt up simultaneously. In a rapid glance I saw what had happened. The door of the lateral cage had been opened and the beasts rushed towards it in tumult, fleeing the horror of the drama in the central cage.

"I felt my adversary's clasp slacken. I loosed his tongue. He bounded out after the others and the door shut quickly behind him.

"It was over. I was saved. But in what a plight!

"The terrified attendants had not moved to help me. It was not to them I owed my unhoped-for preservation, but to a courageous young woman, who had not lost her head and who pulled back the sliding door which separates the central cage from the animals' compartments.

"I got up, panting. I had still enough strength to salute the public and to reach the door, but, once on the other side, I collapsed in a dead faint."

Edmond was removed to the Dubois Establishment after having his wounds temporarily dressed. The surgeons were in favour of amputation there and then, but the young trainer refused his consent so forcibly they were obliged to let him have his way. After long and painful treatment lasting several months, they succeeded in saving his arm, but the hand he had so boldly sacrificed in the battle, whose bones had been so horribly crushed, remained useless, the fingers stiff and twisted.

Every Parisian who knew the animal-tamer has seen the black glove which never left his mutilated hand, a perpetual mourning reminding Edmond of his awful baptism of blood on September 11th, 1888.

The last two of the four brothers were not so celebrated as their elder, Baptiste, and their younger brother, Théodore, but their career, although shorter, was not less adventurous. Justin Pezon's fate was particularly tragic: he was assassinated in 1873 on the road between Châteaudun and Orléans, by a former manager whom he had discharged.

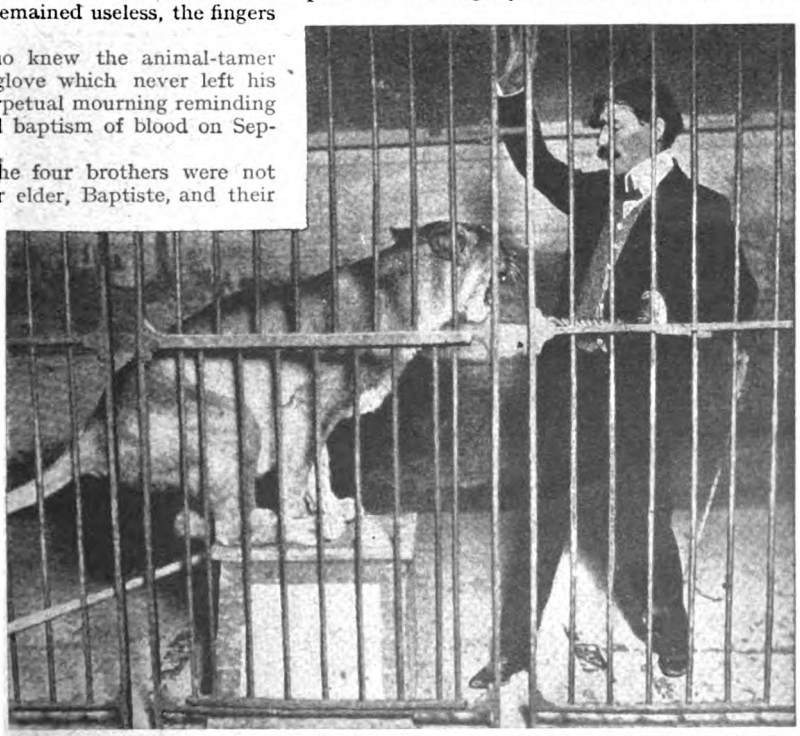
His widow and children "carried on" and their menagerie was very successful. The daughter in particular, Jeanne Pezon, was distinguished for her wonderful bravery and ease in the cages.

The death of Jean Pezon, nicknamed Jean de l'Ours (Jean of the Bear), was not so dramatic, but no less premature. Upon his widow, as upon Théodore's and Justin's, devolved the heavy burden of keeping the show running successfully without neglecting her children's education. These children, the moment they were old enough, came to their mother's assistance. Gilbert Pezon distinguished himself many times by his bravery, while Anna and Joséphine, like their cousin Jeanne, were first-rate tamers.

But the most useful and practical assistance that Jean Pezon's widow met with was that of her son-in-law, Emilien Castanet, Joséphine's husband. Although Castanet was related only by marriage with the famous lion-taming family, the extraordinary personality of the man, who, before he met his death, when he was only thirty, had been successively sailor, riding-master, gymnast, tight-rope dancer, aeronaut, toreador, and animal-tamer, deserves a brief sketch.

Castanet's father was a lawyer in Nîmes; in 1869 he decided to send his son, then aged twelve, to sea, and the lad shipped on board the s.s. *Irrawaddy*, as cabin-boy.

At twenty Castanet went to Spain, after a year's military service in the Dragoons. For a while he went in for bull-fighting, but his being a Frenchman was against him, and the toreadors, who saw in him a dangerous rival, found means of making him leave the bull-ring in disgust, otherwise he might well have put Bombita, Lagarijo, and Reverte in the shade.



EDMOND PEZON, WHOSE TERRIBLE DUEL WITH A LION, HEREWITH DESCRIBED, NEARLY ENDED FATALLY.

In 1884 he returned to France. It was in Provence that he first came in touch with the widow Pezon's menagerie, and saw Joséphine Pezon in hose, trunks, and a tunic with a train, playing with her lions.

This was a great double-event for Castanet; he had at last found his true calling—or at least so he believed—and also the only woman in the world. He asked Mme. Pezon if he might marry her daughter and discipline her lions. He was accepted in both capacities, son-in-law and tamer; his fine, open countenance, as well as his renown in the arena, clearly indicating to the mother what a valuable asset he would be.

The marriage took place at Marseilles in August, 1885. No commonplace wedding this, for the contract was signed in the central cage, with several four-footed, but hardly reassuring, witnesses. The young people went off on their honeymoon in a balloon on the day after the ceremony.

In his new profession Castanet proved himself, as ever, careless of danger and intrepid to the point of foolhardiness. He had several accidents in 1886 and 1887, namely at Toulouse, at Castres, and a bad one at Puy-en-Velay, but these damped his ardour no whit. It was on August 11th, 1886, at Puy, that Castanet just missed being eaten alive by his lion, d'Artagnan. The beast caught the tamer's arm in his terrible claws, and nothing but Castanet's herculean strength, which loosed the brute's hold by main force, saved him from destruction.

But now he began to sigh for fresh laurels, preferably those of Blondin, the famous rope-walker, who crossed Niagara. At Toulouse in 1887 he made his *début*, crossing the Garonne on a wire-rope stretched sixty-six feet above the river. He did the return, crossing with eyes blindfolded and his head in a sack, and, finally, crossed again pushing a wheelbarrow in front of him. At Auche he did even better: he had a chair brought, which he placed on the wire, sat on it, produced a spirit-stove, and made an omelette; all this balanced in mid-air.

At Saintes, in February of 1888, Castanet found yet another opportunity to show off his daring intrepidity. One fine morning a full-grown lioness, called Haydée, managed to escape from her cage.

In her walk abroad, Haydée met an unfortunate dog, which she ripped open with one stroke of her paw. Having acquired the taste for killing, the lioness next flung herself on a horse. At this moment Castanet came on the scene. Without a moment's hesitation he slipped under the horse's belly and, gripping the lion's hind paws, bound them firmly together with a rope which his assistants flung to him from the top of a caravan where they had climbed for safety.

It was at Angers that Dame Fortune deserted this heroic dare-devil.

On September 16th, 1888, in the latter town, the tamer had arranged to become a rope-walker again "for one day only," and to add a really unprecedented attraction to his ordinary programme.

Having gone through his usual turns on a wire stretched sixty-six feet above the Champ de Mars, Castanet announced that at nightfall he would "execute an aerial crossing, carrying on his head fireworks which he would ignite on reaching the middle of the cable."

In his book, "Dompteurs Célèbres," Bidel tells the story of the result of this foolhardy undertaking, as seen by an eye-witness.

"At the appointed hour the daring equilibrist fastened on his helmet, to which were attached various fireworks. In vain his wife and mother-in-law implored him to give up the idea of wearing that dangerous headgear. Castanet was deaf to their entreaties.

"He mounted the wire, where he stood with all the ease of an actor on a solid stage, and then went forward with firm and easy tread, his pole balanced lightly in his hand.

"An immense crowd stretched out beneath him, silent in face of such prodigies of valour and dexterity. His young wife, in tears, walked almost under the cable, following her husband with her eyes. Her friends tried to calm her, but she had a presentiment of ill-fortune; 'I know something dreadful will happen,' she said.

"Having got three-quarters of the way across, the reckless equilibrist set some of the fireworks alight; the rockets went off first and sheaves of fire enveloped Castanet's head and fell all about him in sparkling golden grain.

"The crowd applauded loudly. Castanet continued on his way. Now it was time to let off the fire-crackers; one detonation followed another, shaking the artist a little, but he quickly recovered himself. About his head there floated a cloud of powder. Would this cloud blind him, prevent him from seeing the cable?

"Castanet had almost reached the end of his journey between earth and sky. A last detonating report resounded. Then a cry of agony escaped every lip, a whisper of shuddering horror:—

"'He has fallen!'"

Yes, he had fallen, suddenly, all of a heap, from the force of the shock of the last explosion.

People rushed to his assistance. "I'm all right," said Castanet, to his brother-in-law, Gilbert Pezon. "Take me home." But as the sole of his right foot was badly torn and his left thigh gashed, and as the doctors feared internal injuries as well, he was taken, as they advised, to the hospital.

The internal injuries, unfortunately, were only too real, and later in the evening the poor fellow died, murmuring:—

"I couldn't see the wire!"

Such was the end of the reckless, daring Castanet.

Bereguisse!

Translated from the French of André de Lorde by Ethel Christian.

Illustrated by E. P. Kinsella.

A LUXURIOUS automobile with crest-emblazoned panels drew up at the corner of the Rue de la Paix and the Boulevard. Almost at the same moment a taxi stopped on the other side of the street.

The first motor belonged to His Excellency General Gregorieff; the second conveyed the two detectives told off by the Prefect of Police to guard the person of the Prince. This vigilance was especially necessary on account of the sanguinary and brutal part recently played by Gregorieff in repressing disturbances in Moscow. The bitter cruelty of his methods had raised such a storm of indignation in Russia that the Czar had been obliged to ask the Governor, Prince Gregorieff, to tender his resignation.

Since then he had been living in Paris, flinging away his vast fortune in every kind of extravagant excess, quite untroubled by the sentence of death passed on him by the Secret Society of Terrorists, although he had been mysteriously warned of his fate.

And now, leaning back in the depths of his luxurious motor, he awaited the coming of a little milliner with whom he had made an appointment on the previous evening. For several days past she had attracted his attention as she went to and fro in this corner of Paris, which he looked upon more or less as his own particular happy hunting-ground. The girl, though well-grown and beautifully formed, seemed very young, and it was always the freshness rather than the ripeness of the fruit that attracted the Prince.

Having followed her several times he spoke to her one day as she paused, looking in at a jeweller's window. Dazzled by the Prince's promises and disarmed by a pretty present, she allowed him to walk with her. He soon learned that her name was Germaine, that she left her work each evening about seven o'clock, and that never before had she made friends with anyone who spoke to her in the street. She promised, however, to go and dine with him next evening.

It was already twenty past seven, and the Prince was growing impatient when a pretty little laughing face appeared at the carriage window. Quickly he opened the door and Germaine sprang into the automobile; her coming was like a little gust of youth and perfume.

The motor glided smoothly and silently towards the Bois, followed closely by the detectives in their taxi.

Germaine's prattle amused the Prince. She told him of all the little happenings of the day and evinced a joyous, childlike delight in the luxury with which she now found herself surrounded. Gregorieff was a man of about sixty, with close-cropped hair and moustache turning grey. His powerful torso and delicate, shapely hands gave him air at once refined and brutal. His eyes, of a very light grey, seemed kind, but a heavy square jaw lent a look almost of bestiality to the lower part of his face.

It amused him vastly to see his little companion's pleased excitement as he enumerated all the gaiety he proposed for her entertainment: first they would dine at Armenonville, then a theatre, and after that supper at a swagger restaurant.

As they passed the Printemps with its lovely display of feminine fripperies, Germaine expressed a wish to go in and buy some gloves.

The Prince gave an order through the speaking-tube, and the automobile came to a standstill in front of the shop, where Germaine, with the zest of a child in a sweet-shop, bought several pairs of different shades and length. Then they resumed their drive towards the Bois.

During dinner Gregorieff drank sparingly, contrary to his usual custom. Everyone who knew him was, as a matter of fact, accustomed to his excesses. Neither waiters, nor his friends, nor the women with whom he associated, were in the least taken aback at seeing him fall down on the divan in some *cabinet particulier,* helplessly drunk, senseless, besotted. But that evening Gregorieff was careful not to frighten his new conquest by the sight of his drunkenness.

Taking advantage of his unwonted lucidity he set out to impress his little friend with a glowing idea of his own importance. He talked of the Czar and the Grand Dukes with affectionate familiarity, told her amusing stories about them, and finished up by bragging of the high office he had held in Moscow. Thinking still further to enhance his prestige, he recounted some of the repressive measures he had taken against the Nihilists.

Germaine listened, shuddering with fear, making every now and then an involuntary movement of recoil as he dilated on some special atrocity.

This amused Gregorieff, and with dessert he began the story of a conspiracy of which he had been the intended victim.

"One day, my dear, a revolutionary was brought before me in whose house compromising papers had been found. The scoundrel had, however, written the names of his fellow-conspirators in cipher, and nothing would induce him to denounce them."

"And you? You made him?" Germaine asked.

"Yes, and I'll tell you how I did it. I was smoking an excellent cigar. Every time I put a question to the fellow, I put the burning end of my cigar on his hand, or on his face, while my men held him firmly. He yelled. But he named all his accomplices. He went about it, however, so slowly and reluctantly, that I was obliged to light a second excellent cigar."

Looking at Germaine's colourless face, the Prince thought he had sufficiently impressed her, and in order not to overdo it, suggested, by way of diversion, looking in at the Moulin Rouge for a little while.

The performance amused Germaine immensely, but when they came out, and Gregorieff, impatient to take her to his flat, proposed going straight home, she exclaimed that he had forgotten his promise, and that they must first go somewhere "swagger" for supper. He needed little persuasion, and they set off on foot for the famous restaurant, l'Abbaye de Thèleme. Every now and then Germaine turned and looked behind her uneasily: she had noticed the two men following them at a little distance. Gregorieff noticed this, and reassured her laughingly.

"There's nothing to be nervous about," he said. "Those fellows are not Apaches; they are policemen. They are watching over us like two guardian angels, and we are in no sort of danger while they are at our heels. They don't have half a bad time, either," he went on. "I send them out plenty of drinks during the night to pass the time while they're waiting for me."

And indeed, a few minutes later when Germaine and he were installed in a beautiful little private room, the Prince told Victor, the *maître d'hôtel,* to be sure and send out their usual drinks to George and Lucien.

"Neither George nor Lucien are on duty to-night, your Excellency. They are both new men whom I don't know."

"They were probably relieved this morning," said Gregorieff, carelessly, as he tossed off a glass of kümmel.

The *maitre d'hôtel* discreetly withdrew, after having covered the supper-table with an assortment of appetizing dishes and many bottles.

The Prince became bolder; his pretty companion was not very forbidding, and each brimming glass was spiced with kisses. Germaine herself refilled the glasses, and that of the Prince was never empty.

Presently his head began to nod a little, and his words ran into one another. He talked unceasingly, growing more and more incoherent, and ever in his rambling speech the name of Ivan recurred continually.

"But who is this Ivan of whom you speak?" asked Germaine.

"He is a blackguard," he stuttered; "a blackguard who wanted to skin me. *I* skinned *him*. Oh, yes! It was he whom I made talk with my cigar. Later I had him flayed to death before my eyes, flayed with the knout. But up to the very end he cried to me, 'Bereguisse!'"

"Bereguisse! What does that mean?"

"DRAGGING HIMSELF ON HIS KNEES, HE TRIED TO REACH THE DOOR."

"It is a Russian word which is untranslatable. It means something like 'Take care,' or 'Woe betide you!'"

Gregorieff, utterly drunk, slid into maudlin tears of self-pity over the dangers he ran.

It took two more bottles to console him and restore his self-complacency.

Then Germaine threw him a challenge.

"I wager you can't drink off this big glass of whisky."

The stake was a kiss. Gregorieff rose uncertainly, and with a shaking hand took the glass which she held out, swallowed the contents at one gulp, and fell back on the divan, an inert heap. In vain Germaine tried to get him to rise, his legs would no longer support him. She drew away from him then, and in a voice suddenly grown terrible:—

"*Bereguisse!*" she cried.

The man started.

"I forbid you," he said, "forbid—to say that word—do you—understand, my little Germaine?"

"I am not Germaine. I am Sonia—Sonia Nimidoff."

"Nimidoff!" murmured the Prince, with difficulty, and trying to recall the name.

"I am Ivan's sister."

"What do you want of me?" he screamed, terrified.

"I want to kill you like a dog."

"It is I who will kill you," he yelled, hurling himself at the girl. But hardly had he taken one step when he staggered heavily and with a cry of rage fell helpless on the floor.

Sonia gave a short, terrible laugh.

"Caught in a trap, Gregorieff. For a long,

long time I've followed you, lain in wait for you. Nothing can save you from our vengeance now."

Dumb with fear, the Prince gazed around him with haggard eyes, wondering with what weapon she would deal out death. Seeing nothing, however, in his judge's frail hands, hope flickered up, and dragging himself on his knees, he tried to reach the door. But Sonia, who, during the last moment or two, had been playing with her long gloves, suddenly twisted them round his neck, and with savage energy to which her hatred lent a tenfold strength she squeezed the Prince's throat as it were in a vice.

Gregorieff screamed and twisted convulsively, and screamed again until the noise of the struggle might well have been heard outside. But Sonia, never loosening her grip, began to play her part, as it were in a drunken noisy orgy.

"There, darling," she cried. "Do be quiet—they'll turn us out. Oh, how funny he is. Ha, ha, ha! you're drunk—drunk!"

And at every moan of her victim, her laughter rang out louder, covering even the death-rattle of the Prince.

Soon the body lay still, and a clayey tinge crept into the congested face. The sentence of the Secret Committee of Terrorists had been carried out.

After carefully obliterating every sign of the struggle, Sonia rushed to the door crying, "Help, help!" At her call the *maître d'hôtel* and a waiter came running.

"What is it? Is his Excellency ill?"

"I don't know. He suddenly fell down."

"He drank too much. This was bound to happen."

Everything possible was at once done to revive the Prince, but in vain. He was dead. Sonia, taking advantage of the general confusion, was slipping away, when she felt the manager's hand pressed on her shoulder.

"Oh, no, my dear; you can't clear out like that. You'll have to make a statement to the police."

In vain she protested, entreated, railed at him. The manager insisted that the two detectives who had guarded the person of his Excellency must come up before she left. Almost immediately they came in, distracted.

"Keep this affair quiet," they said to the manager. "The body must stay here till dawn. Have a taxi called to take this girl to the police-station."

The manager went out, leaving the two detectives holding Sonia firmly, despite her frantic efforts to get free.

But hardly had the door closed when they let go of their prisoner.

"Bravo, Sonia!" cried one of them. "This time the beast is dead. He'll bite no more."

"How did you do it?" asked the other.

"As it was arranged I should. I strangled him with my gloves. That leaves no trace. Quick! Put the handcuffs on me. We must play up to the very end."

The door opened at that moment, and a waiter announced that a taxi was waiting at the side door.

An hour later Sonia and her two accomplices were steaming towards the frontier.

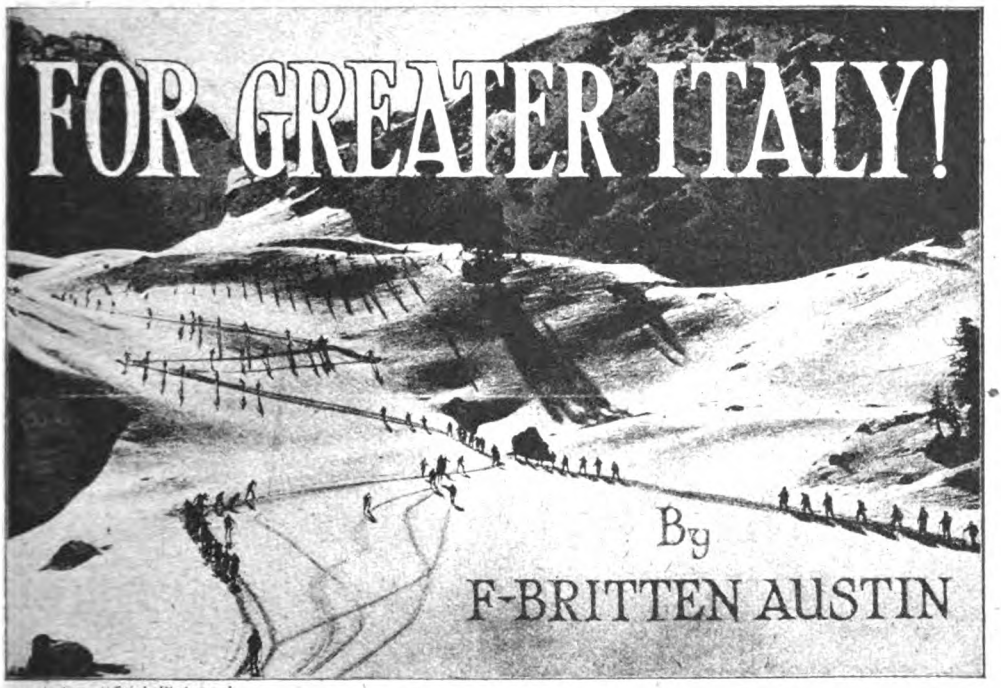
AN IMPROVEMENT ON DOUBLE DUMMY.

By H. E. Bardwell.

TO those persons who delight in a game of four-handed Bridge, it must be a matter for regret—at least amongst some of them—that "double-dummy" Bridge offers no very great attractions. I will endeavour to show a really good Bridge game for a pair—a game that is always full of interest, and one that calls for quite as much finessing and calculation as any four-handed game. It can be learnt by any Bridge player in a few moments, and this I consider an advantage. Briefly, it is this: The pack is dealt out into four hands. The player (having cut lowest) winning the first call has the first privilege of exchanging four (or fewer) cards from his hand—not exposing them—for the top four cards in the hand opposite him. He proceeds then on the rules of Lily Auction, and calls one spade, or one heart, or one club, or whatever he considers best. His opponent then has the privilege of taking the next four (or fewer) cards from the same lot as the first, and if he thinks he can overcall his opponent, he does so. The first player is obliged to call some suit, and if his opponent elects to change four (or fewer) cards he must overcall in turn, as he cannot then pass. The "Auctioning" goes on until the thirteen cards are exhausted, or until both players are satisfied with their hands, then play goes on along the lines of ordinary Auction Bridge. The player who has to defend the attack, as it were—i.e., whose call was the lowest—has the privilege of playing the remaining third hand, which, so far, has not been touched. He must lead from his own hand before he exposes the third hand on the table. This evens matters up somewhat, as the player who persists in overcalling his opponent must have an extra good hand, and the other has two hands to play to equalize it. The discards are not used, and the overcaller plays his own hand only, without a dummy.

I have played this game with a friend on one or two occasions, and I can assure your readers that it is brimful of excitement.

FOR GREATER ITALY!



By F-BRITTEN AUSTIN

Italian Official Photograph.

THE hot sun of a morning in early summer beat down upon the narrow street of a little North Italian town. Down the long, confined vista of colonnaded shop-fronts, hung with striped awnings of warm hue, the air quivered above the cobbles, troubled the view of an arched, square-turreted gateway which barred the street. The sky above was a long strip of intense azure. Sharp to the left, near at hand, was the roughly-paved piazza; white-fronted, Venetian-shuttered houses looking out to the large round basin, the weather-worn Triton of the fountain where the pigeons, flashing in the sun, circled down to drink. A group of girls, bare-armed, black-haired, skirts turned up over vividly-coloured petticoats, water-jars underneath the gush from the Triton's mouth or poised already upon the graceful head, stood laughing and chattering about the fountain. Their gaze was unanimously turned towards the large building, the words *Palazzo Municipale* over its arcaded front, which occupied one side of the square. Carved on that front, beneath the clock, defaced, but not entirely obliterated, might yet be made out the double-eagle of Austria—a memento of a tyranny that had fled before a passionate patriotism, to entrench itself, not far distant, high on the crag and glacier of the eagle's haunts, ready to swoop. But not to that did the merry, whispering girls dart their flirtatious glances. The two grey-uniformed Bersagliere sentries, strutting up and down before the building, superb under the drooping cocks' feathers of their grey-covered, tilted hats, were for once immune. A handsome young officer, black-moustached, dark-eyed, who stood, one foot upon the running-board of a car that hummed ready to start, in conversation with another officer, was the point of interest. Both officers, clad in the grey field-service uniform, wore upon their arm the brassard which indicated that they were of the Staff. The officer on the point of departure wore the badges of captain; he who was giving him his final instructions was a *tenente-colonnello* (lieutenant-colonel).

"You quite understand what the General wants, don't you, Ricci?" he said, using the familiar "*tu*," universal between Italian officers. "As soon as possible after the position is captured, a report on its possibilities for field artillery if we can advance to the covering ridge. The General thinks it will command the valley road up from the railway. You will see. Don't get buried under an avalanche!"

"Very good, colonel. I quite understand." He saluted—a quick movement of the hand horizontally below the peak of the cap, palm downwards, as though shading the sight, in the Italian fashion—and jumped into the car. He pushed to one side a heavy fur coat, settled himself. A moment later the car was humming out of the square, spinning down the long colonnaded street.

In front of him loomed the heavy mediæval gateway, square above its arch. Its ordinarily forbidding, gloomy aspect was lost in a generous decoration of green boughs, a trophy of Italian flags, red, white, and green, above a white-crossed shield, a great inscription—"*Per la più grande Italia!*"* The battle-cry of Italy's greatest

* "For Greater Italy!"—the theme of D'Annunzio's discourses in the doubtful days preceding Italy's intervention.

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modern poet—the cry that had rung, beseeching, dominating, inspiring, through dithyramb after dithyramb of the wonderful passionate orations by which he had wakened the glowing soul of a people into flame—was blazoned here as everywhere in Italy. Under that gateway thousands of Italy's sons had marched to conflict with the *Tedeschi*, to the redemption of their brethren; thousands more would march. And those to come would shout as those who had gone had shouted: "*Per la più grande Italia! Evviva Italia!*" The captain, glancing up at it ere the car shot under the dark arch, carried the inscription marked upon his brain through the obscurity. Familiar enough, he re-perceived its meaning with a thrill. What mattered the little individual life he was hurrying to risk? "*Per la più grande Italia!*"

The car sped along a road on the left side of a pleasant valley. In front, immediately claiming the eye, a range of Alpine peaks, dark rock-scars breaking their dazzling whiteness, exquisitely delicate and fine-drawn as perceived through the warm atmosphere, towered in lofty austerity into the rich unvarying blue of the sky. The road, thick with dust, climbed towards them in long loops and bold curves. Close upon its left dark woodland descended, masking ever and anon the distant prospect behind a shoulder of the hills. To the right, across the green valley where the cattle stood hock-deep in flowers, village after village—yellow-ochre and burnt-red, its slant-roofed campanile high above the flat houses—clustered itself upon an eminence or nestled low down to the valley-stream. Viewing the scene of quiet bucolic prosperity, it was difficult to imagine that among the silent peaks in the background lurked the terrors of war; men embattled for mutual destruction.

Along the road creaked and squealed clumsy country-carts, drawn by oxen with patient heads bowed to the yoke. They hoofed the dust with the unhurried motion of centuries of tradition in their toil, careless of the goad of the bare-footed *contadina* crying them to hasten, to turn aside to allow passage for impatiently-hooting motor-lorries. In strange contrast of locomotion, column after column of lumbering mechanical transport rushed down from the mountains in a smother of dust and petrol-fumes. Column after column proceeding upward was overtaken and passed by the captain's car. Ever in front towered the range of glittering peaks, in unshakable, eternal calm. Yet from somewhere among their solitudes came a distant, faint roar that was not the roar of Nature's thunder.

The road had climbed high. The valley was narrower. The orchards sloping to its stream were white with fruit-blossoms. The air was rarefied, but still hot under the direct rays of the sun. The dark woods of oak gave place to darker woods of pine. The road swept round in sharp curves on low-parapeted stone bridges above a rushing torrent. Bare green slopes, strewn with grey boulders, opened between the woods. The car overtook a long marching column of Alpini crunching the dust under heavily-nailed boots, pack high upon the shoulders, alpenstock as well as rifle, sweating profusely, yet pressing upwards with quick step, the eagle's feather in their soft hats still jaunty. It was the rear battalion of a brigade whose units were successively overtaken and passed.

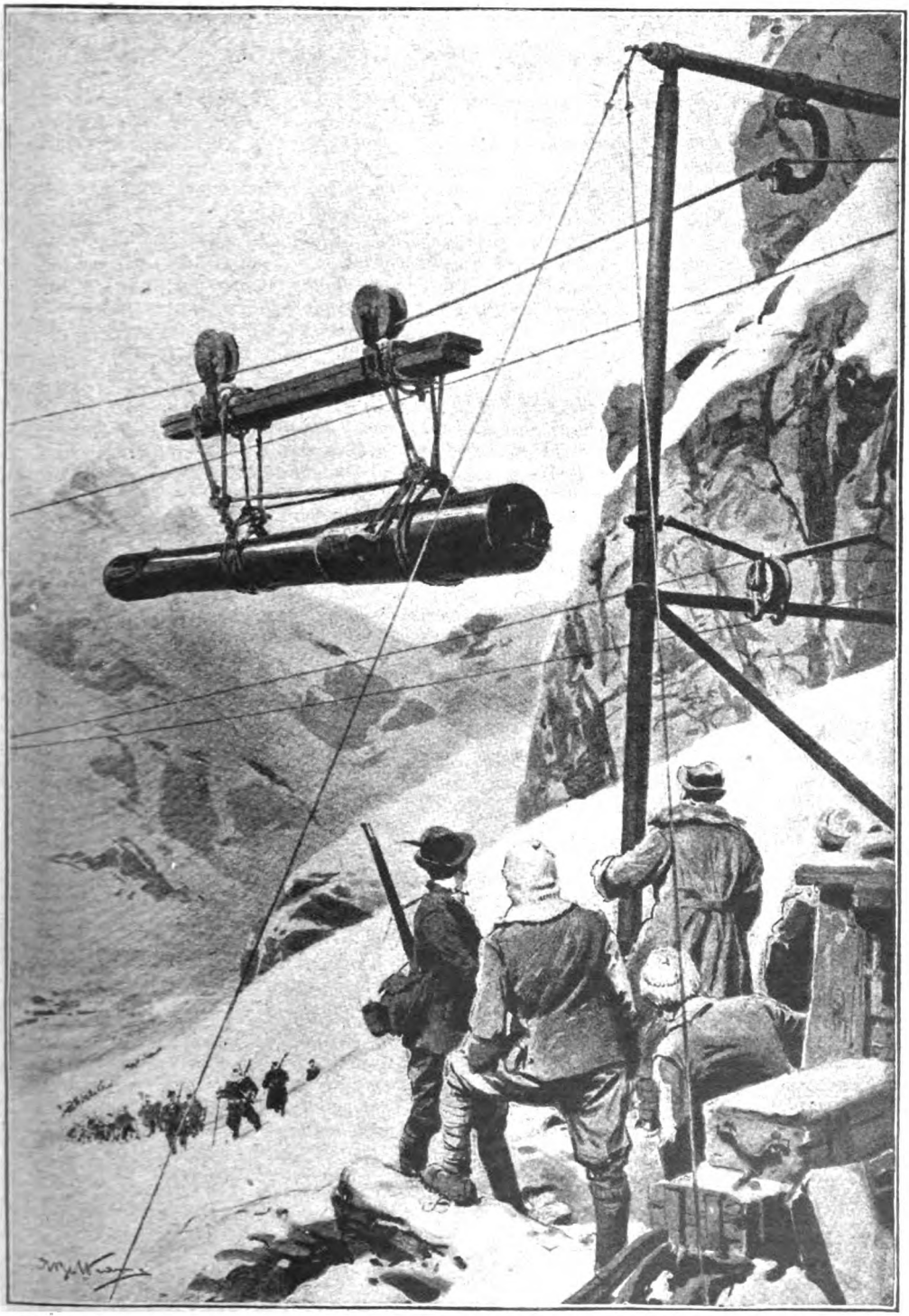
The road swung to the right round the head of the valley, which here commenced in a sheer drop. As the car followed it, there was a sudden spurt of flame, a drifting tawny smoke, in the dark depths to the right. A tremendous, shattering detonation that re-echoed endlessly down the valley ceased at last, leaving audible the eerie moaning of a great shell speeding upwards over the mountains, already far away. Another such flash and detonation followed the first. Looking over the side of the car, the captain perceived, deep down, the long barrel of a monster gun nosing upwards, men tiny about it. A second gun was depressed, a crane-slung shell hovering near its breech. Once more there was a crash—a series of distracted, conflicting echoes that shattered the Alpine silence as thick glass is starred and fractured. In the sky above the valley an eagle beat the air with heavy, violent wings, startled into a vertical climb, and then glided swiftly with outstretched pinions downwards to its crag.

The road still ascended, left the valley, climbed tortuously a rocky spur, thinly grassed. The car took the gradient slowly, noisily, on second speed. In front, struggling on the brow of the spur, a column of "caterpillar" tractors, drawing the component parts of a battery of heavy howitzers distributed on trucks, rattled and detonated like machine-guns in full action. The battery *personnel*, harnessed to long ropes, hauled and strained at the leading piece in an effort to facilitate the passage of the steep crest. Before the war the boldest artilleryman would have scouted the possibility of such heavy ordnance at this height among the mountains. But the battery was only entering upon the area of its severest toil.

On the crest of the spur the road turned to the left, climbed at an easier angle. The view, hitherto much masked by closely-overhanging slopes, opened out. To right and left the gaze plunged into blue depths, fell on miniature woods and thin white strips that were roads. Far away on either hand the mountain ranges lifted themselves, superb, into the blue sky. But directly in front the higher peaks were not seen. A sheer wall of dark rock barred the view as effectually as it seemed to bar further progress.

At the foot of the precipice was a stationary column of motor-lorries, tiny by comparison with the towering mountain. The road went straight up to it. The captain in the car bestirred himself, picked up his heavy fur coat. Far away and high above was a prolonged rumbling roar that seemed to re-echo from invisible walls in the upper atmosphere. Involuntarily the captain raised his eyes. The blue sky was untroubled.

Upon the face of the rock—which leaned back less precipitously than had appeared—swarmed hundreds of grey-uniformed Engineers. They were laying a pathway of heavy timber, erecting huge sheers, arranging a complicated tackle of



"THE 'TELEFERICA'—THE FAMOUS WIRE-ROPE RAILWAY THAT, MANY TIMES MULTIPLIED, MADE MODERN WAR POSSIBLE AT THESE HIGH ALTITUDES."

thick rope and large pulleys. Back along the road the first of the heavy pieces for which this hoisting apparatus was in preparation lumbered already into sight.

This tackle was not the only feature on the precipice. A little farther along, at the centre of the line of lorries, a light cantilever steel standard was connected by drooping wire ropes to the summit. Suspended from those ropes by a running-gear of pulleys, a little car was gliding steadily upwards, another coming down. It was the *Teleferica*—the famous wire-rope railway that, many times multiplied, made modern war possible at these high altitudes.

Ammunition in boxes was being unloaded from the lorries, stacked on the roadside near the *Teleferica*. The downward-gliding car was seized by a group of waiting men, steadied, stopped, quickly loaded with the boxes.

The staff-captain's motor drew up. He descended, walked towards the *Teleferica*, exchanged a salute with the dapper little ammunition officer superintending the work.

"*Buon' giorno, signor capitano,*" said the little lieutenant. "Are you going up to see the attack?"

The captain nodded.

"Ah! Some people have all the luck! I never see anything. My battery never has any casualties—and here am I left supernumerary. I might as well be mountaineering for my pleasure!" He drew a lugubrious grimace of comic, half-sincere self-pity.

The captain struggled into his heavy fur coat, apparently superfluous here in the fierce heat which glowed from the rock in the noonday sun.

"A glass of wine before you ascend, *capitano!*" said the lieutenant. "Come, I will take no denial!"

He led the way to a little wooden shack close under the lee of the precipice. Within, the walls were decorated with a number of scathingly satirical drawings of the *Tedeschi;* some extremely clever studies of the mountains in their different aspects of light—sunset and dawn, moonlight. The host, perceiving the captain's glance, made a deprecatory gesture.

"What I am reduced to, *signor capitano!* And I might be blowing the Austrians out of their eyries!" He was typical of that new Italy which, while it cannot cease to be artistic, holds all of small account that is not war against the Austrian. He filled the glasses, raised his own, half turned to a portrait of Gabriele d'Annunzio that shared with the King the honours of the wall. "*Per la più grande Italia!*"

"*Per la più grande Italia!*" Both officers drank the toast. "To-morrow morning she will be a little greater if the fates are kind," added the captain.

A few minutes later he was lying full-length in a narrow, low-sided cage, suspended from a pulley on a thick wire rope, and being hauled up, with much creaking and strident protest of the pulley-wheel and vicious jerking of the loose rope, to the summit of the cliff.

There he was again in a scene of activity. Broad-shouldered porters, in frayed and much-worn Territorial uniforms, were bearing away the ammunition boxes that had arrived at the summit, carrying them towards the next station of the *Teleferica*. The captain followed in their track.

The wire-rope railway ran in short sections from station to station. The gaps between the sections—stretches of comparatively level ground—were filled by the sturdy Alpine porters, or, in the case of longer distances, by pack-mules. It was the line of communications to the sector of the front immediately ahead—a front that for the most part of four hundred and fifty miles is thrust out amid the eternal snows of lofty mountains, along the edges of deep chasms, upon the knife-ridges of *arêtes*, across the Arctic desolation of glacier and *névé*. Over it was transported food and ammunition, light guns, clothing, equipment, all the necessaries for an army in action. By it descended the wounded and the sick, the unwanted stores.

Over section after section the staff-captain passed, ascending higher and ever higher towards his goal. About him rose the great peaks, their robes of snow dazzling white under the sun, splendidly superior to the ragged army of stunted pines that sought to climb them, last lost sentinels straggling half-submerged in the snow. Up sheer rock-faces whence birds of prey darted frightened from their nests, over deep chasms where he looked down to a dark profundity of pines and rushing streams, over great empty fields of snow far away beneath him on which zigzagged long lines of tiny black figures insignificant in the immensity, bearing burdens; upward and ever upward to the regions where snow and ice reign in eternal winter, the *Teleferica* bore him. And ever between the stations there were throngs of busy men, more and more thickly clad at each successive height, who marched under heavy loads.

Always there was a thunder rolling among the mountains. From apparently inaccessible crags dark against the blue, from bare snow ridges, from bleak white wastes where there seemed nothing to detain the eye, spurted little darts of flame, drifted faint smoke. Detonations came in sharp direct cracks, fantastically re-echoed; in a long rumbling angry mutter from the more distant guns. From steep mountain sides, avalanches, loosened by the concussions, rushed downwards in a white smoke of flying snow, their thunders rivalling the persistent artillery.

The staff-captain dallied not. The bombardment which was to prepare the way for the attack had already commenced. He hurried over the intervening spaces between the wire-rope stations, ascended higher and ever higher in the little dangling cages.

It was afternoon when he reached the limit of the *Teleferica*—a little snow-covered hut on a desolate ledge. Here, sheeted down from the weather, stacks of supplies awaited further transportation. It was the depot of the quartermaster of the battalion holding the sector. An Alpine soldier, thickly clad, was in waiting to act as guide.

The staff-captain borrowed an alpenstock

from the quartermaster and set out. In front of him stretched a great smooth slope of snow that ascended until, high above him, it cut—in sharp contrast—across the blue of the sky. Its whiteness was blinding—the captain fitted on a pair of darkened spectacles. Far across it, dark dots strung like beads on an invisible thread, a company of soldiers was marching in a long single file zigzagged over the snow, climbing to the crest. Nearer at hand, to the right, vivid spurts of yellow flame shot out from mounds of snow aligned at a little distance from each other. The detonations of the battery came crisply to the ear, predominant over the rumble and roll and confused echoes of the general bombardment.

As the captain followed his guide up the vast empty slope, he heard a long plaintive whining in the air, descending a scale of tones. It had not ceased when over to his right a great fountain of snow leaped skywards from the field—subsided, leaving a smother of dirty smoke. The whine finished in an ugly rush, a muffled detonation. Another and another followed, in each case the visible effects of the shell's explosion preceding the noise of its arrival. The Austrian batteries were replying.

The echoing thunder of the bombardment continued all through the dreary fatiguing climb up the slope of snow. The higher peaks began to throw long blue shadows across its whiteness, their argent heads to be suffused with gold.

The ridge to which they climbed was not, after all, the summit. There was another, yet higher, whence splintered crags serrated the sky. They reached it, stood among rocky pinnacles.

"*Attenzione, signor capitano!*" said the guide. "It is dangerous to linger!"

Followed by the captain, he swung himself round a jut of rock, dropped into a trench excavated deeply in the snow. As they dropped a couple of ugly "*phutts!*" just above their heads explained the warning.

The Alpino grinned.

"Tirolese!" he said. "We could have gone round by a safer way, *signor capitano*, but their snipers do not often hit if one is quick."

The deep trench, in cold blue shadow through the gilded surface of the snow, ascended the ridge at a gentle angle to the summit. It emerged into another trench that ran roughly parallel to the ridge. This was filled with soldiers, who, well below the high parapet, larked with one another, threw snowballs, wrestled, and laughed. They were keeping themselves warm during their enforced wait. Every one of them was garbed in a thick white outer coat, with a hood. This was the main trench: these were the men who presently were going to attack.

On steps cut in the parapet stood sentries, peering towards the enemy. The captain ceded to an impulse of curiosity, interrupted his hurried progress towards the battalion advanced headquarters, mounted to the side of one of these sentries, looked out.

About him was a sea of mountains, their lower flanks in cold blue light, their snow-covered peaks orange against the azure sky. Immediately in front of him were the nearly-submerged stakes, the snow-thickened upper wires, of wide entanglements. Beyond them stretched the confused, humped, and fractured white surface of a high glacier. On the other side of it was again a snow ridge, and in front of that ridge could be discerned a belt of wire entanglements—the enemy's. In the midst of that entanglement, and all up the snow to the ridge, leaped fountain after fountain of white snow, momentarily brilliant against the sky, falling back into a persistent cloud of dark smoke. The noise of the explosions overwhelmed the roar of the guns behind. The preparatory bombardment was in full swing.

Warfare in the high Alps, with their difficult communications, is necessarily carried on by comparatively small bodies of men. The vast masses of the Western and Eastern fronts could not possibly be maintained among the crags and glaciers of the Italian frontier. Operations by single battalions have all the importance of a divisional attack elsewhere. In this case one battalion had been allotted the task of storming and retaining the enemy's position.

In the little low timber-hut sunk beneath the snow-level, which was the battalion headquarters, the captain found the colonel commanding the regiment in conference with the local commander and the company leaders. The atmosphere of the cramped interior was thick with the exhalations of the half-dozen men, warm with the heat of a petrol-stove. Capitano Ricci saluted the colonel, was received affably. A pair of keen eyes under level brows appraised him, smiled upon him. For his benefit the colonel recapitulated.

"The plan is briefly this. The artillery is cutting the wire and shelling the trenches immediately in front of us. The Austrians, of course, will assume that we are going to attack there. They will keep strong reserves at hand in the vicinity—as strong as they can, for we know that there is no very large force opposite. The artillery is making it difficult to bring up the reserves from the rear. All their communications are under fire. Now, we hope that the enemy will concentrate on the damaged trench in front of us. The attack is being made by four companies. One company will advance at 9 p.m., using every precaution not to be seen, and will cross the glacier at an angle to its right. It will fall upon the enemy's trench here"—he indicated a spot on the left of the enemy's position as marked on a plan spread over the table. "It should effect a surprise, as the enemy will be far from expecting an attack on a part of the line which has not been bombarded at all. Directly that attack gets into the trench it will turn to the left and continue to press on as hard as possible. If it is progressing well, it will send up a green rocket. If it is in difficulties, it will send up a red rocket. The second company will advance at 9.15 p.m. As stealthily as possible it will advance to within about a hundred metres of the trench that has been bombarded. There it will halt. If matters go as I expect them to, the company on the right will send up a green rocket. Then the Austrians, realizing that they

"A LONG LINE OF MEN, ALL GARBED IN WHITE. ONLY WHEN THEIR HEADS MOVED DID THEY DETACH THEMSELVES FROM THEIR SURROUNDINGS."

have made a mistake, will rush up their men from the damaged sector and put up a resistance. The green light will be followed by a red one, which will automatically indicate that the enemy's reserves are engaged. *Whenever that red light goes up*, whether preceded by a green one or not, the second company will rush the trench in front of it. I hope that it will find it thinly held. The third company will advance, with every precaution, at 9.30 p.m. in support of the second company. The fourth company I will retain as general reserve under my command. The men will be served with hot cocoa at 8.30 p.m. Is that quite clear, gentlemen?"

There was a general murmur of assent. The staff-captain requested permission to advance with the second company, the one that was attacking straight ahead. He received it.

The conference was at an end. Officers went out to give final instructions to their subalterns, came in again, beating powdered snow from their huge fur coats. One and all looked like Polar explorers.

Presently orderlies entered, put a steaming-hot meal upon the table. Crowded closely together in the confined space, the officers ate—talking and laughing in high confidence — though in all was the tension which precedes the moment of action. Occasionally during the meal they heard the dull thud of an Austrian shell's arrival. They sat over coffee and smoked.

At last the colonel looked at his watch, stood up.

"It is time to go to your companies, gentlemen. I rely upon all of you as upon myself. I have promised the General that the trench shall be taken —and held. *Per la più grande Italia!* And good luck to all of you!"

Some time later the staff-captain found himself by the side of the company-commander in the deep trench hewn through the snow. It was night, and in the faint reflected radiance of the white walls he could just dimly discern the figures of a long line of men, all garbed in white like himself. Only when their heads moved did they detach themselves from their surroundings. Overhead, above the crisp line of the parapet, the sky was a black background for an immense multitude of strangely brilliant stars. A wind raised little whirls of powdered snow upon the lip of the parapet, blew down into the trench in chill gusts that penetrated the clothing. Not a sound broke the intense silence. It seemed almost

that one could hear the crackle of the sparkling vivid stars. The artillery bombardment had long since ceased. There was nothing to suggest that a death-dealing enemy was hidden only eight hundred metres away across the glacier. No sound came from the company that had already advanced. Along the trench was a murmur of conversation, stifled laughter. The company-commander stood gazing at the luminous dial of his watch.

Nine-fifteen! He turned his head, gave a command in a low voice: "*Avanti!*"

It was repeated in a low murmur to right and left.

In an instant the company-commander, the staff-captain at his side, had sprung up on to the parapet. A bitter wind smote upon them from the darkness, chilling to the bone. The commander glanced back, saw his men like a line of ghosts faint in the dim light, already over the parapet. Then the company commenced to thread its way through the openings previously cut in their own wire.

Stealthily, with the utmost precautions to avoid any unnecessary sound, the company stole across the uneven, heaped, and riven snow and ice of the glacier. Under that black night of stars it stretched away white to a near indistinctness. The black masses of the mountains occulting the stars near the horizon were too indefinite to indicate direction. Compass in hand, the commander counted his paces over the snow, his only means of judging distance. For greater accuracy the staff-captain counted also. They spoke not a word. From the obscurity came the whispers of the men as they preserved a rough alignment.

Sliding, stumbling over the inequalities of the frozen surface, they pressed onwards. Somewhere over to their right, higher on the glacier in front of them, the other company was advancing also. There was neither sound nor sign of it. In that dim desolation the staff-captain might with difficulty see his immediate companions. The remainder of the company was swallowed up, was noiseless. It seemed that they were stumbling on alone—on and on, an interminable distance — a few lost figures struggling through an Arctic night.

Suddenly from the blackness straight ahead a beam of intensely white light shot out horizontal with the ground, sweeping it. At its first birth-splutter they flung themselves upon the snow, lay motionless. The searchlight—a wall of milky radiance to one side of them, suffusing the snow with a pale reflection—then, as it shone full on them, a lane of intolerable light from a blindingly violent source, casting long, pitch-black shadows from every hump and hummock of the ice—swept questingly over the glacier, rested doubtfully here and there for a moment, passed on again. The Austrians were on the alert. Cautiously, still repeating to himself the number of paces they had marched when they dropped, the staff-captain glimpsed to right and left of him, looking for the company. The nearer figures he saw, immobile, their white humped backs looking like inequalities of the snow. Those more distant were utterly indistinguishable. The searchlight ceased abruptly. The world was annihilated in a profound blackness where the stars reigned alone.

The two officers rose to their feet, marched onward, resumed their count of the paces. To right and left of them rose ghostly figures, stumbling forward. On and on they went, bruising themselves on sudden obstacles in the black night, the dim uniform whiteness of the snow a bewilderment to the vision. Far away in the mountains of the Austrian position a livid flash leaped to the sky. The reverberation of a gun's discharge rolled heavily and ominously to their ears, the long hurrying whine of a shell approached them. There was an instant of suspense. Were they after all discovered? The shell passed overhead to burst far behind, inaudible. The trench in front was invisible in the darkness—not a flare, not a rifle-spurt marked its position.

"Seven hundred!" Both officers murmured the number at the same moment.

"*Alt!*" The whispered order was passed to right and left. The line of ghostly figures sank down, was merged in the ice and snow under the twinkling stars. "*Baionett' cann!*" There was a faint rustling, a just-audible click and clink of bayonets being fixed. Then again silence. The company might have ceased to exist.

The company-commander and the staff-captain gazed earnestly to their right front, towards the point where the other company should be attacking. At any moment now! Their comrades had a quarter of an hour's start, had a rather longer, more difficult stretch to traverse. But they should have reached their objective. At this moment stealthy white-clad figures should be crawling among the stakes of the entanglements, snipping at the wire. The two officers stared in the fateful direction—in suspense for the up-flung flare, the shouts and stabs of flame. They stared at complete obscurity.

The searchlight on the trench in front leaped out again to the night, its origin startlingly close. This time, as it swept over them, it illumined the short heads of the stakes of the wire entanglement that cast black shadows on the snow which all but submerged them. They were very near. In the intense light the white craters of the shell-holes produced by the afternoon's bombardment, hung with broken wire from supports all askew, gleamed like craters of the moon seen in uncanny proximity. Once more the light swept the glacier, searched doubtfully, and was extinguished.

A sudden shot, off to the right front—a swift succession of loud reports—woke wild echoes from unseen cliffs. High up on the glacier, to the left of the Austrian position, flare after flare was flung into the sky, eerily illuminant, plucking strange rock-forms into grotesque relief. There was a fierce shout that rolled in repeated reverberation, a wild tumult of voices in a crisis of human lives, confused shots, isolated and in irregular volleys, the dull thudding explosions of bombs. The first company was attacking.

The two officers lying in the snow gazed with fixed intensity towards the distant fight whose tumult swelled louder and louder with every moment. The wild flares continued to soar into the night, but as yet no rocket—neither red nor green—had leaped up to tell them of its fortunes. The searchlight in front shot out again, swept quickly from side to side. It illumined only the apparently empty, tumbled desolation of the glacier. But it continued to blaze out into the night. Both officers cursed it under their breath. From the trenches they had left, far behind, rifle-shots rang out, the rapid hammering of a machine-gun. The reserve company was indulging in a little tricky target-practice at the searchlight. It was successful. The beam of light vanished.

At the same moment a little spark of trailing fire went rushing skywards from the tumult of the flank attack. It was watched with suspended breath—green or red? The rocket burst into an effulgence of uncanny green light. The cheer which came from under it was like a ghostly utterance of the cheer repressed on the lips of the men lying prone and motionless on the glacier. The colonel's forecast was sound.

But now the uproar on the flank increased to a wild intensity. Incessant were the sharp detonations of the rifles, the dull thuds of the bombs, mingling with a clamour of voices, shrieks, and yells. No more flares went up from the point of conflict, but from all along the trench they soared into the air, symptomatic of the nervousness of the unseen defenders. Machine-guns began to rap out their streams of bullets in blind hazard across the glacier.

The staff-captain pressed himself close to the snow. Overhead cracked the rapid bullets of the Austrian machine-guns. The wind that blew over the glacier, ruffling the loose surface snow on to his face, was intensely cold. He felt himself a heavy leaden thing, frozen stiff. Over to his right front the savage noises of the contest, weird and awe-inspiring on this summit of the world that seemed so uncannily near to the flashing stars, swelled hideously cacophonous. Livid bursts of flame flickered and were reflected redly on snow surfaces, on black jagged spires of rock. All along the trench the blindingly white flares leaped upward, another soaring as its predecessor circled down in a parabola that illumined the unearthly confusion of the glacier-surface. He seemed a mortal for ever severed from his fellow-men, set down in a world that was primitive Arctic chaos, a paralyzed spectator of a contest of fierce mountain spirits fighting over spectral issues, remote from the interests of humanity. A part of his mind harked back to the warm summer, the green fields, the somnolent little town of the valley he had left that morning, and it seemed that those things belonged to another existence. Yet all the time he gazed fixedly to the point whence the next rocket should shoot up. He awaited it as he would await the breaking of a spell.

At last! The trailing spark of fire shot upwards, burst into hanging globes of red light, the snow rosy beneath them. On the instant the company was erect, rushing forward. Leaping soaring flares from the trench revealed them—white moving figures casting black shadows on the white glacier. Spurts of livid flame, loud quick detonations darted from the white ridge in front. "*Avanti! Avanti! Italia! Italia!*" shouted the commander. "*Itàlia! Italia! Savoia!*" came the fierce antistrophe from the rushing men flinging aside their alpenstocks, brandishing their bayoneted rifles.

They were fighting their way up through the deep, loose snow, the wreck of the wire entanglements. The staff-captain floundered in a white shell-crater pitilessly illumined by an overhanging flare. The loose ends of the barbed wire tore at his clothes, clutched round his legs like tentacles that would hold him for Death to strike. In front the spurts of flame sprang from a wall of darkness above the white, high up. Near him was the company-commander, extricating himself from the shell-hole, the last of the wire safely passed. He had a sense of tensely struggling figures all around him. He, too, got clear of the wire. He saw the company-commander throw up his hands, roll sideways over the snow, still shouting "*Avanti! Avanti! Italia!*"

He passed him, took up the cry: "*Avanti! Avanti! Italia! La più grande Italia!*" leading the company that yelled behind him like a pack of mountain wolves. He topped the snow-parapet, saw a fierce face glaring up at him in a strange light, a rifle-barrel levelled. His revolver seemed to go off of itself, a sharp, autonomous detonation. The face opened a black mouth, sank out of vision.

He sprang into the trench, shouting like a madman. Behind him came the Italians, tumbling down in fierce onslaught. One of them struck him violently on the back as he slid down, knocked him face forward into the snow. As he went he heard a sudden heavy crash, saw a flare of lurid light. A bomb! He picked himself up, only half-realizing his escape, fired at once into a dark body that wrestled with a white-clad soldier. There was a confusion of blows, of shots, of ear-splitting detonations—shouts, cries, shrieks. At one moment he was in close contact with a panting man, warm breath upon his face, eyes flashing momentarily in the reflection of a rifle-shot, looking into his—the next the man was gone, there was space about him. The confusion cleared—there were bodies underfoot—white-clad men about him shouting unintelligibly. Farther along the trench another flare went up.

The staff-captain turned to his right along the trench. "*Avanti! Avanti! A destra! Italia! Italia!*"

Behind him followed a rush of fiercely yelling soldiery. "*Italia! Italia!*"

They were held up by a traverse of snow-covered rock. A shower of bombs came over it. From a communication trench a mass of dark figures rushed at them, shouting with guttural voices. There was bitter conflict—an ebb and flow in the surge of men.

Then another fierce shout: "*Italia! Italia! Savoia!*" It was the third company flinging itself into the trench to support the attack.

In the midst of the tumult could be distinguished the scream of Italian shells passing overhead to burst dully on the Austrian avenues of approach.

Suddenly the angry dominant note of the babel of voices changed. Accents of supplication rang out amid the jarring reports: "*Kamerad! Kamerad!*"

The staff-captain made his way along the deep, dark gully in the snow, where motionless figures stood with arms stretched up above their heads, rifles at their feet. Ghostly white figures who had retained their weapons joked at them in rough *patois*. He met the commander of the company which had attacked upon the flank. The trench was completely captured.

There followed a period of fierce toil in the trench. Under the twinkling stars in the black sky, men delved at the snow of the parados, cutting fire-steps, building it up into a breast-work. Behind them little parties of prisoners, stretcher-bearers, and slightly wounded men stumbled across the broken surface of the glacier. The toiling men gave no thought to them as they laboured to prepare for the storm which would surely burst.

It came. An ugly hissing rush heralded the first Austrian shell. It exploded with re-echoing violence and a great fount of up-flung snow right on the newly-strengthened breastwork. Another and another followed in a methodical bombardment directed by calmly judicial gunners ensconced in little huts far back in the mountains. Amid the nerve-harrying rush of ever new arrivals, constant explosions, the men toiled frenziedly. Reserves of ammunition were brought up. Machine-guns were put in position. Telephone wires were laid. The fourth company took up a post on the glacier whence it could rush into the trench in a counter-attack if needed.

Suddenly the bombardment ceased. The Alpini crouched behind the parapet, fingering their rifles with gloved hands, peered out into the indistinctness of the snow.

There was a rush of dimly-seen figures from the obscurity, a blaze of fire from the trench. Near the staff-captain the colonel sat speaking into the mouthpiece of a telephone. Rush after rush of hurrying shells passed overhead. Out there on the slope where an Austrian battalion was surging to the attack, shrapnel after shrapnel lit fierce sudden flares in the dark sky. There was again a tumult of voices, a re-echoing chaos of men at strife. It persisted, swelled, died down.

The silence of an Alpine night rested once more over the battle-ground, was broken only by the roar of a distant avalanche.

In the twilight of approaching morn an officer made his tour of the outposts on what had been Austria. "*Chi va là?*" rang the sharp challenge of a white-garbed sentry almost indistinguishable against the snow.

"*Italia!*" came the proud response.

The first rays of the sun gilded the surrounding summits in the glory of a new dawn.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 33.

At last they have in deadly grapple met,
The Rulers absolute and Peoples free,
And one result at least the world shall get,
That such inhuman war no more will be.

1. Mere boy he seems; sound added will avail
To show him hero of a fairy tale.
2. A glorious speech? a song? a humble lay?
Yes, yes, it is exactly what you say.
3. Oil to assuage the waters is of use,
But given to this confusion will produce.
4. If you would feed your body or your mind,
A mixture for the purpose here you find.
5. Though grand, it is a grandeur of a kind
We'd rather see before us than behind.
6. Boots, bands, and beds, nay, even stamps and hose,
And many other things hereby one knows.
7. Ten in one lady fair we here may spy,
Mysterious appanage of those that fly.
8. With sixty-five or -six to boot, 'tis clear
We have accounted for the circling year.
9. Would be a mighty fiddler, I declare,
But most unhappily he's not all there.

QUESTOR.

	Answer to No. 31.			Answer to No. 32.		
1.	B	ras	S	1. T	oni	C
2.	L	as	T	2. U	mbrell	A
3.	A	m	O	3. R	evelle	R
4.	C	row	N	4. K	rup	P
5.	K	nav	E	5. E	lectorat	E
				6. Y	ach	T

NOTE.—Light 1. Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop.*

Answers to Acrostic No. 33 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on September 10th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

RESULT OF THE FIFTH SERIES.

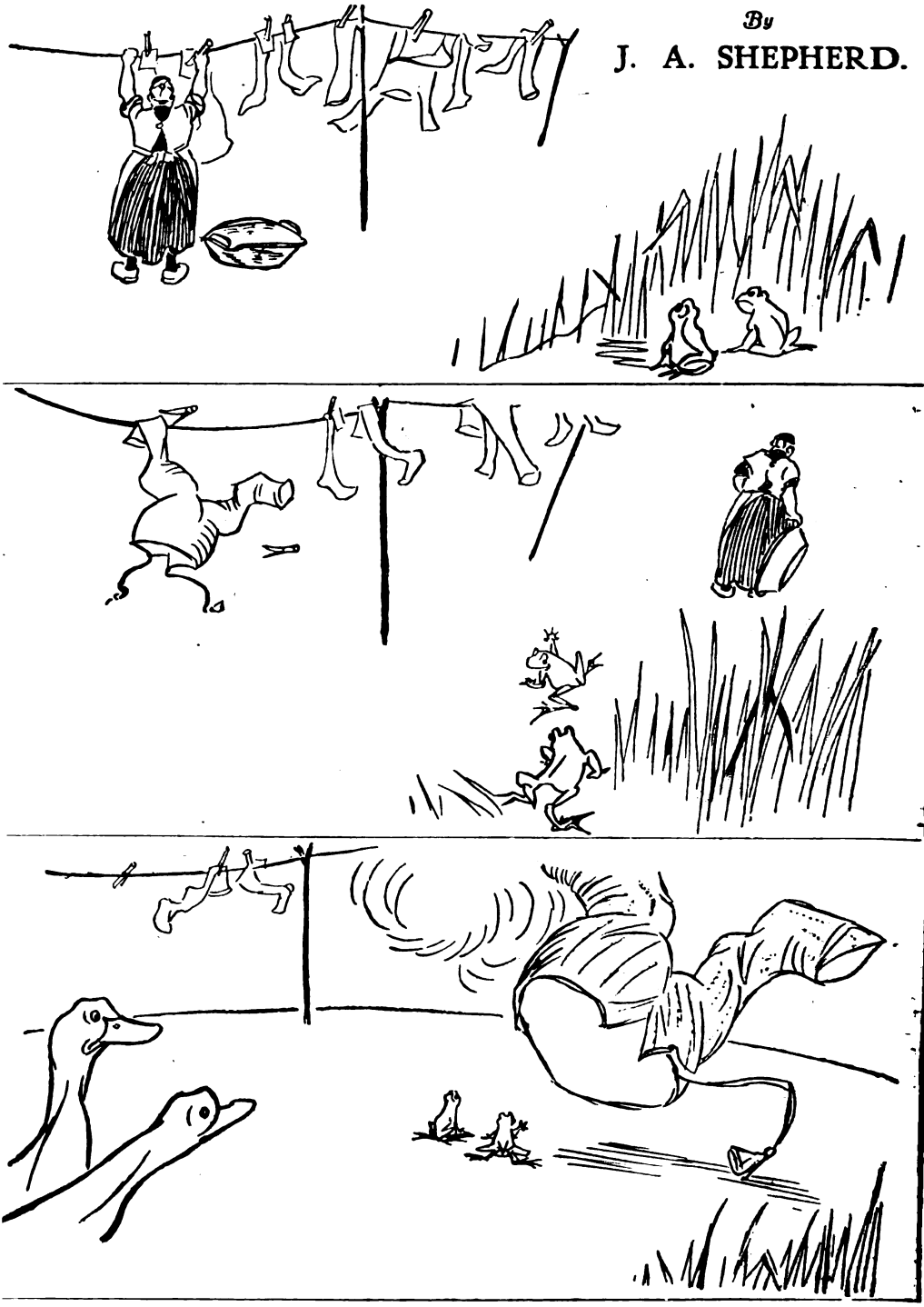
No solver succeeded in answering all the six acrostics of the fifth series with entire correctness, though no light was hard enough to defeat every one. Five solvers missed one light only, and a cheque for £1 10s. will be sent to Arctic, Beggar, Kola, Lobo, and Tuph; six others were correct in all but two lights, and a cheque for 17s. will be sent to Altcar, Corisande, Dythe, Josephus, Reg, and Splosh. All these eleven winners will be ineligible for a prize in the sixth series, now running.

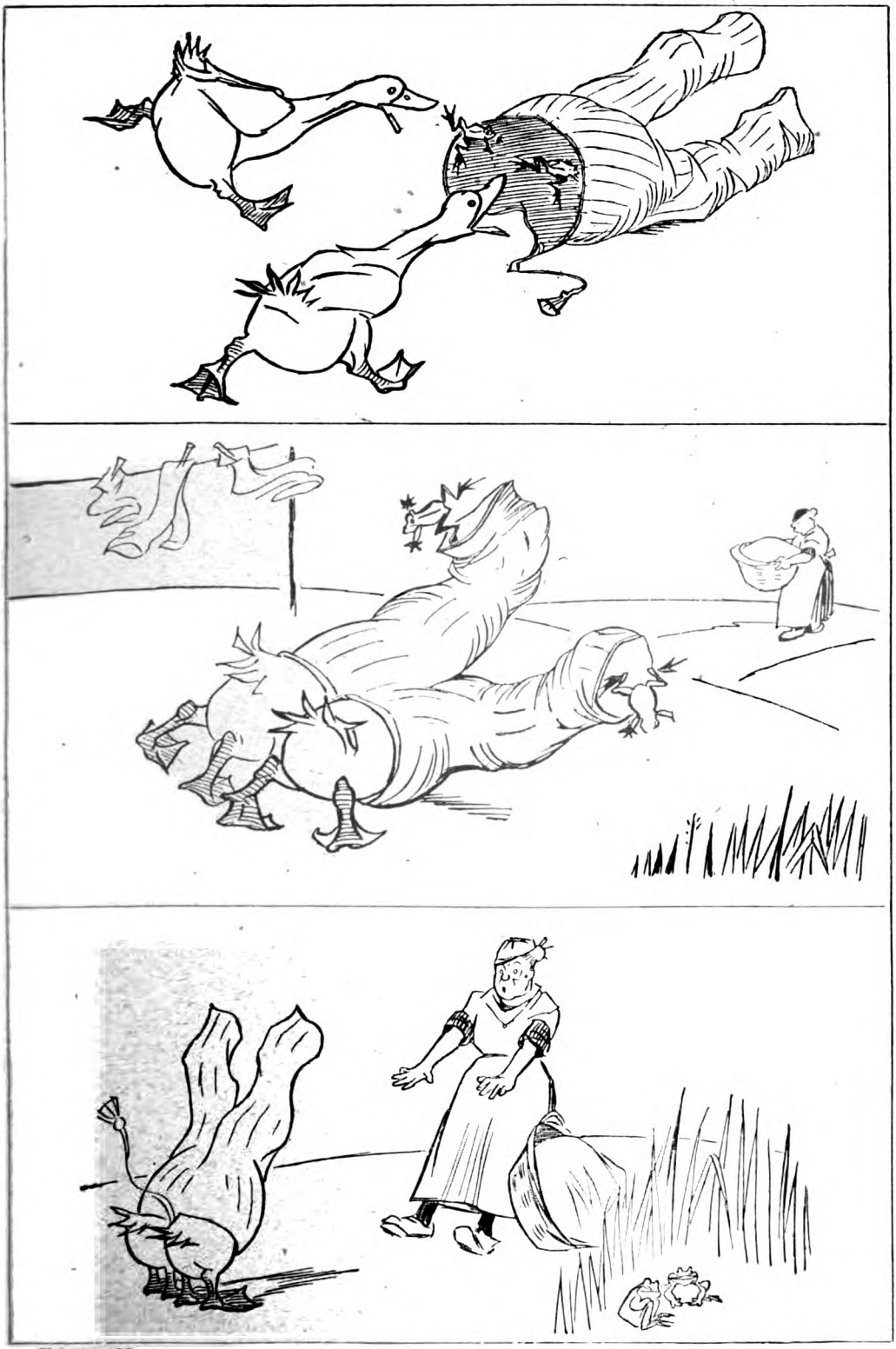
The names and addresses of the successful solvers are: Arctic, Mr. C. J. Nichols, 23, Sutherland Gardens, East Sheen, S.W.14; Beggar, Mr. B. G. Pearce, 5, Ethelbert Road, Bromley, Kent; Kola, Mrs. R. Absalom, 11, Churton Place, S.W.; Lobo, Mrs. L. Morris, 74, Larch Road, Cricklewood, N.W.2; Tuph, Mrs. M. Clark, The Elms, Shepperton Green, Shepperton; Altcar, Mr. J. W. Munro, Altcar Ranges, Hightown, Liverpool; Corisande, Mrs. Bridges, 7, Alexandra Road, Clifton, Bristol; Dythe, Lady MacAlister, The University, Glasgow; Josephus, Mr. J. Spencer, 44, Camberwell Road, S.E.5; Reg, Mr. H. Lees, 3, Campden House Chambers, Kensington, W.; Splosh, Mr. L. Dale, Christ's Hospital, W. Horsham.

The remainder of the solvers, some five hundred in number, who sent in answers during the past series, missed three or more lights. Lack of space forbids answers to queries appearing in print, but the Acrostic Editor endeavours to send replies by post to correspondents who enclose stamped addressed envelopes with their letters of inquiry. A few solvers are earnestly requested to conform to the very simple rules governing the competition: the solution of each acrostic must be signed with a pseudonym, while answers to two different acrostics must be on different papers.

DUCKS v. FROGS.

By
J. A. SHEPHERD.



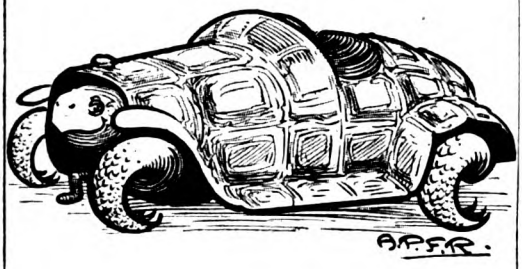


"ANIMALLOYS."

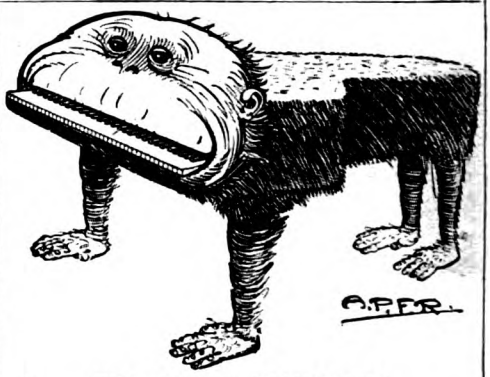
Can You Guess Their Names?

By ALICK P. F. RITCHIE.

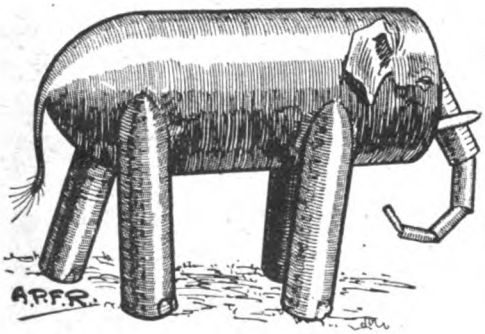
The name of each of the extraordinary birds and beasts shown on this and the following page is a combination of some well-known object and the name of a familiar bird or beast. Thus the first is known as the Motortoise (motor and tortoise) and the second as the Grand Pianorang (grand piano and orang). Following these examples, the puzzle is now for readers to find names for the others, which they will be able to compare with the correct list in next month's number.



1. THE MOTORTOISE.



2. THE GRAND PIANORANG.



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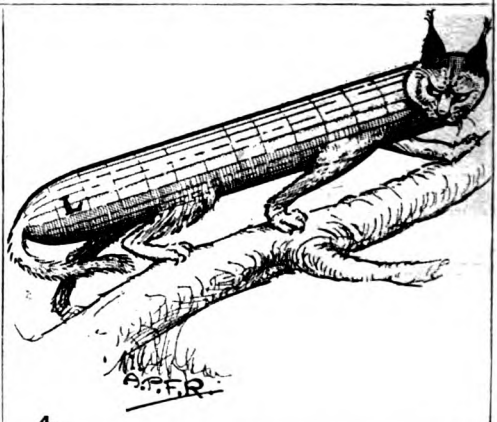

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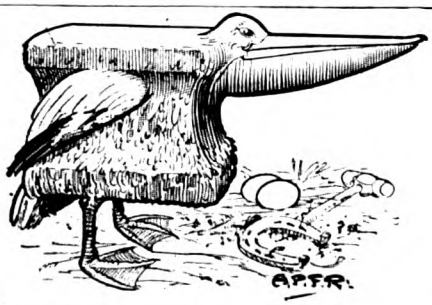

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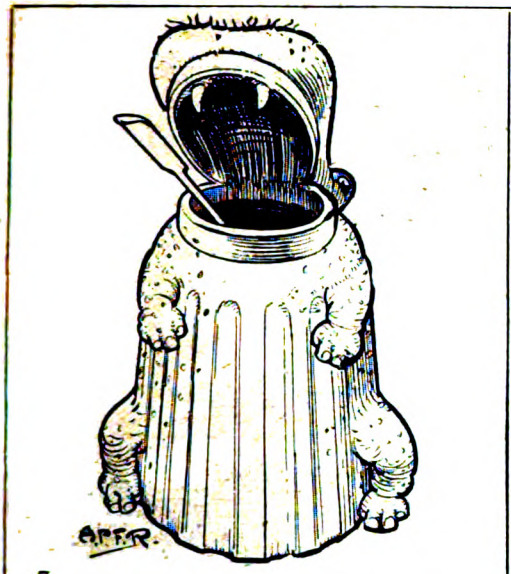

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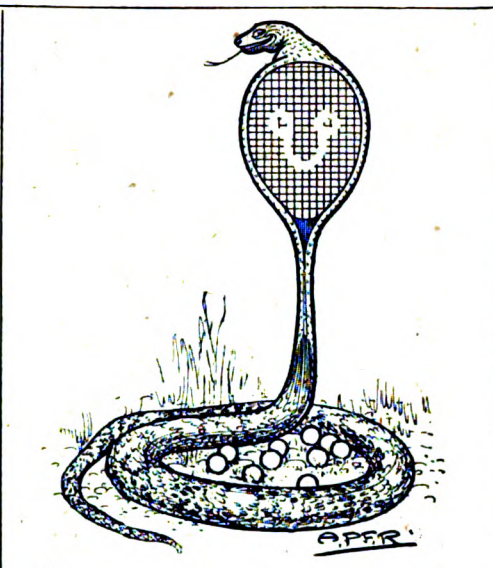

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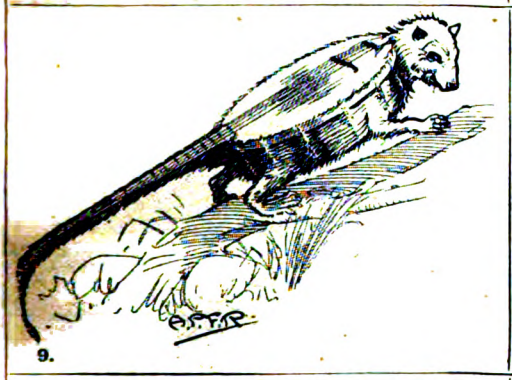

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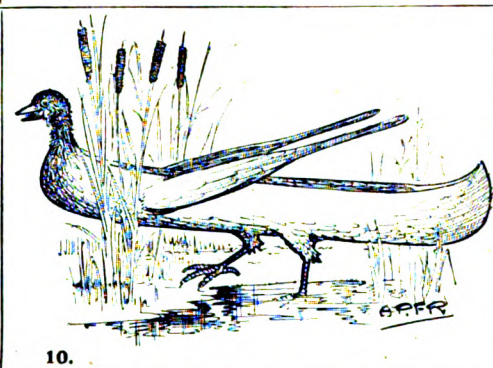

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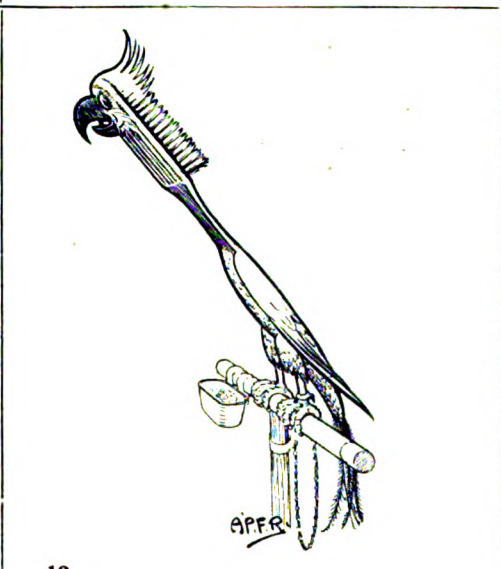


12.

THE LOST BUTTON.

By

JAMES FRANCIS DWYER.

SOMEBODY has defined crime as "the momentary victory of an hereditary craving over common sense." In the case of the two Gilfillans the same craving manifested itself in each man at the same moment. This was peculiar. The desire came upon each of the brothers to possess two blood-horses belonging to a neighbour, and common sense was routed in the struggle to suppress the craving.

The Gilfillans got the horses, and, incidentally, the sheriff got the Gilfillans. A stern judge conducted the judicial inquiry, and, unable to see that the brothers were victims of a craving handed down from a horse-loving ancestor, he sent them to Enlota Penitentiary for seven years.

This was unfortunate. The younger Gilfillan was consumptive, and Enlota's "Little Hell" was not an ideal health-resort. Three months after sentence the boy was sent to the jail-hospital, and became firmly imbued with the feeling that he would not recover his health. The sentence had smashed up the last ounce of vitality that was holding the fort against the disease, and the prisoner was sinking rapidly.

Now, prisoners in jail-hospital receive no tobacco. Whether the prison medico believes that the brand supplied to the numbered inmates is a compound that can only be safely consumed by the physically strong is not known, but the weekly supply allowed to a prisoner on the "works" is immediately cut off if he is taken to the hospital. The dearth of tobacco affected the consumptive Gilfillan. He craved a "chew," and in distress he acquainted the brother of his craving by what is in jail-parlance known as a "stiff." With a pin the sick man scratched his wants on the loose leaf of a hymn-book, and in due time the pitiful note, after passing through the hands of a dozen prisoners, reached the healthy brother, who was learning to manufacture boots in the prison workshop.

The elder Gilfillan had deep pools of sentiment beneath a rough exterior. Furthermore, he took no heed of consequences. He pictured the sick brother, waiting tobaccoless in the dreary hospital, and he took a chance to supply him. The chance was a risky one. While passing the barred hospital-yard he dexterously jerked a small cube of tobacco to the white-faced brother, who happened to be walking up and down inside, and he breathed a tremendous sigh of relief when he became certain that the warder in charge of the squad had not noticed the action. The elder Gilfillan was not afraid of any punishment that might fall upon himself; he was afraid lest the morsel of tobacco would be taken away from the sick youth who craved the delicacy.

But Nemesis was galloping on the heels of the two Gilfillans. Warder Bulstrode, looking down from his perch on the south tower, saw the movement, and Bulstrode was a conscientious officer. Five minutes after, the younger brother was stripped of the miserable gift, and the giver was dragged before the chief warder and sentenced to seven days' dark cell for a breach of prison discipline. In jail charity is a virtue that is promptly smothered when the powers that be become aware of its existence.

It was the elder Gilfillan's first introduction to the dark cell. When he was pushed into the windowless chamber the horrible, intense, suffocating darkness closed in upon him like a smothering pall. Blind and stupefied, he groped his way around the bare walls, the horror piercing him through and through like an icy sword. Afterwards he flung himself on the stone floor and lay like a man stunned by a terrific blow.

Some hours later he thought of the button. A medical student, who had once undergone a term of imprisonment at Enlota, had promulgated a theory by which the mental

agony produced by dark-cell treatment could be considerably relieved. He advised all prisoner friends who might visit "The Dog-hole" to toss a button into the air and while away the time by searching for it on hands and knees in the darkness. The student understood the value of little things, and he recognized the fact that a continuous hunt for a missing button would drag the mind away from the black abyss of insanity.

Gilfillan, groping blindly in the darkness, remembered the advice. He ripped a button from his striped jacket and tossed it into the thick air. Listening intently, he heard it fall in a far-away corner of the cell, and on hands and knees he started to search for it.

The sport fascinated him. When he discovered the metal disc he spun it up, and again started in pursuit. The leaden hours rolled by slowly, but the game continued. Gilfillan blessed the button. He began to feel a love for it. He called to it when it hid from him in the cracks between the cold stones, and he cried hysterically over it when he discovered it after a long search. It seemed alive. It became a companion to him in that horrible, black vault into which not one single ray of light came to pierce the darkness.

It was on the evening of the sixth day that Nemesis clinched with Gilfillan. The prisoner had, up to that moment, thrown the button up a thousand times and found it on each occasion by laboriously searching on hands and knees. But on the evening of the sixth day a peculiar incident happened.

The prisoner threw the button up into the blackness, but it did not come down again.

Gilfillan waited with aching ears to hear the tinkle of the metal on the stone, but he heard no sound. The button didn't fall, and the silence that filled the cell as he stood listening hurt him. He clenched his teeth to strangle a scream of terror that fear pushed to his lips. What was wrong?

The prisoner's trembling knees gave way under him and he sank to the floor. His hands moved out into the darkness and commenced to feel the stone flooring, but every nerve was taut.

On each other occasion when he had tossed up the button he had heard it fall distinctly, but he was certain that there was not the slightest sound after the last toss. Still, he would search.

The hot hands crept over the stones eagerly, feverishly. The fingers worked madly, but the bare floor mocked their search. There was no button. Again and again and again the prisoner searched. Through the cold hours of the night he crawled backwards and forwards till each joining between those tomb-stones of Hope seemed familiar to his blind fingers. But there was nothing on the floor. The button had not fallen after he had jerked it into the blackness!

Gilfillan tried to think. Why had it not returned? he asked himself. What had happened to it? There was nothing above him but bare walls, and yet——! Where was it? Again and again he whispered the question to the thick black pall that seemed to heave around him. He asked it in a louder tone. He screamed it. Then something like a laugh came from one corner of that brain-destroying pit of horror, and Gilfillan was panic-stricken.

Imagination, contrary to the opinion of scientific experts, lies in the stomach, and the bread-and-water diet that Gilfillan had been receiving was not sufficiently weighty to keep it down. The prisoner began to see things. The thick waves of curse-encrusted darkness welled up from the corners and smothered him. Invisible hands grasped his throat and strangled him. He kicked at the door leading into the dark corridor opening into the main wing, but Warder Tomlinson, of the night watch, was slightly deaf, and did not hear him. He raced around the cell with Terror—grasping, gibbering Terror—at his heels, and the stone vault echoed to his wild screams of agony.

When Warder Dunworth opened the door on the morning of the seventh day to acquaint Gilfillan with the fact that his term in the dark cell was over the hands of Terror had completed their work. The prisoner's face was battered beyond recognition where he had dashed against the walls in his mad race, and he shrieked wildly when the warder attempted to drag him into the light.

Eleven years afterwards, when an enlightened prison controller did away with the dark cells, the masons, tearing down the black vault at Enlota, found a jacket-button securely fastened in a thick cobweb near the ceiling of the cell. But in the criminal ward of Enlota Insane Asylum a prisoner still spends his days and nights hunting for that button.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

369.—A MOTTO PUZZLE.

THIS is a word puzzle that ought not to be difficult for anyone to solve with a little thought and patience.

Y	N	E	B	H
A	C	H	T	R
M	O	T	T	O
O	O	O	P	L
K	S	S	I	O

Place the point of your pencil on one of the letters, and then in a continuous sequence, always passing from a square to another adjoining it (either laterally or diagonally), spell out a very well-known motto or proverb. When I add that, if you started at the Y, you might proceed Y A N C, or if you started at the C you could read C A Y N, and so on, there can be no possible misunderstanding of the conditions.

370.—HOARDED GOLD.

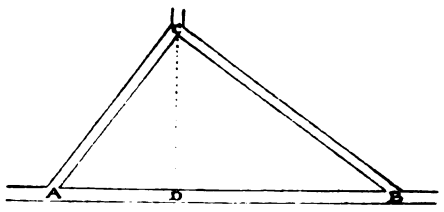
A MISERLY and unpatriotic Englishman hoarded a bag of sovereigns during the war. One day he brought out four empty money-boxes, marked A, B, C, and D, and put one sovereign into box A, and then added a quarter of what remained in the bag; then he put one sovereign and a quarter of the remainder into B; then one sovereign and a quarter of the remainder into C: and, finally, he put one sovereign and a quarter of what remained into D. As he now had exactly a hundred more sovereigns in A and C together than in B and D together, it is an interesting puzzle to discover how many sovereigns were left in the bag.

371.—A DEFINITION.

DR. JOHNSON once defined "network" somewhat in this manner: "a construction of filamentous reticulations with interstices between the intersections." But I always preferred the boy's definition: "a lot of holes tied together by bits of string." Now, can you say promptly what the following defines? "A diminutive, argentic, truncated cone, convex on its summit and semi-perforated with symmetrical indentations."

372.—THOSE RUSSIAN CYCLISTS AGAIN.

JUDGING by the letters of correspondents, readers were so interested in a little incident in the career of two Russian army motor-cyclists that I described in our January issue, that I will give another of their experiences on similar lines. In the section from a map given in our illustration we are shown three long,



straight roads, forming a right-angled triangle. The general asked the two men how far it was from A to B. Pipipoff replied that all he knew was that in riding right round the triangle, from A to B, from there to C and home to A, his cyclometer registered exactly sixty miles, while Sliponsky could only say that he happened to know that C was exactly twelve miles from the road A to B—that is, to the point D, as shown by the dotted line. Whereupon the general made a very simple calculation in his head and declared that the distance from A to B must be—— Can the reader discover so easily how far it was?

373.—A REBUS.

How long will it take the reader to discover the little

bit of advice concealed in the above short picture rebus?

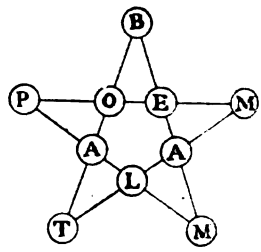
374.—A CHARADE.

My *first* will range the meadow through
In savage pride and state;
But should he make my *next* at you,
Your danger would be great.
My *whole* in russet cap is found,
And robe of lovely green,
Tall, springing from the marshy ground,
Like some bright fairy queen.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

366.—THE WORD STAR PUZZLE.

THE five words will be seen to be: POEM, BEAM, PALM, MALT, and BOAT.



367.—COUNTING THE HUNS.

I HAVE not space to give the complete method of solving this puzzle, so I must be content to say that the prisoners taken at first must be such a number (under a thousand) that if you multiply it by thirty-five and deduct forty-eight, it will be divisible by one hundred and ninety-two without a remainder. The only such number is five hundred and twenty-eight. Therefore a thousand less five hundred and twenty-eight gives us four hundred and seventy-two as the number killed. If the reader checks these figures he will find that there were seventy-two men in each of the four gangs set to work in the end.

368.—A PRETTY END-GAME.

1. P takes P, ch.	1. K moves
2. P—Q 4	2. P—R 4
3. P—Kt 5	3. P takes P
4. P—Q 5	4. P—Kt 5
5. K—B 4	5. P—Kt 6
6. P takes P, mate.	

The Acting Duchess.

By MORLEY ROBERTS.

Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.

THERE was great trouble in Marchester House, and not even the Marchesters' kindly busybody of a neighbour, Sir John Dunstan, could make things go right. It was hard enough for Lord Marchester to be without the resources befitting a nobleman, but when, under Sir John's influence, he put money into a London theatre and lost it all, it seemed that nothing but Tom Marchester's marriage could save them from bankruptcy.

"And it really looks as if the duchess won't come, after all!" said poor Lady Marchester. "If she doesn't do it now——"

That was the rub! Mr. William Bunter, owner of a colliery at Cardiff, another one near Newcastle, an ironworks at Middlesbrough, and a pretty daughter in London, to whom Tom Marchester was devotedly attached, had put his foot down.

"I get something out of everything," he told Sir John, who had arranged the preliminaries of the match, "and what I'm going to get out of this marriage and putting Marchester on his feet is Society. I've got to know the Duchess of Shetland, and, what's more, I've got to be asked to stay at the Marchesters' while she's there."

"She'll be rude to you," said Sir John, "very rude."

"I can stand it," said Bunter. "I shall get my money's worth."

And now after two failures of the duchess to appear Bunter had issued his ultimatum.

"No duchess this time and no marriage any time and no cash for ever!" said Bunter.

It was a very serious situation, and the whole stress fell on Sir John, who prided himself on his ingenuity. He always produced a new play and a new genius as if he had both in his pocket. This time he had Miss Cynthia Hargreaves in it, and she had Marchester in hers, to say nothing about Helen Marchester, who loved her.

It was after breakfast, but no one left the table until Sir John saw the postman as he came up the drive, and had the letters before the others got to the door. He handed one to Lady Marchester, who opened it and gasped and flushed with joy.

"She'll come to-day!" she cried.

"Then I'll telephone to Bunter as I arranged," said Sir John, "and get him over at once."

It appeared that Bunter's morality was as rigid as Middlesbrough pig-iron. It was, of course, morality in the narrow sense. You might rob your neighbour of all he possessed except his wife. You might even finance him into the gutter, if you were yourself "virtuous."

"I shall hate him," said Lady Marchester, but, turning to her son, she added: "I know Celia's a dear, my boy."

"We'll get rid of Bunter when things are fixed up," said Sir John. "I've got a plan."

And then a boy rode up on a bicycle.

"A telegram's coming," said Tom. He got it first, and his mother opened it. She uttered a scream and subsided in the nearest chair; Sir John dropped his cigarette; Lord Marchester actually jumped, and Tom turned pale.

"Can't come, after all!" gasped Lady Marchester, as she collapsed into the encircling arms of Cynthia Hargreaves.

"What's your plan now, old chap?" asked Tom, desperately.

"Yes," said Marchester, "where is it? What are you going to do now?"

But Dunstan stood moving his jaws as if he were chewing, and then a bright and heavenly smile overspread his features.

"Do, do," he said, "do? I'll show you. Look, all isn't lost! I've got it—Miss Hargreaves!"

He spoke with all the authority of a producer on a stage, and the leading lady started.

"Yes, Sir John."

"Let me have a word with you in the garden."

No one said a word as the pair vanished.

"Now, my dear, keep your head," said Sir John. "There's only one way out of this imbroglio. Bunter will be here in twenty minutes. If he comes and the duchess doesn't, it's all up. But—she'll be here!"

"How?" asked Cynthia.

"You're the duchess," said Sir John.

"Good heavens! I——"

"Yes, you, you!" said Sir John. "Don't raise objections. You'll have to act her. You must and shall. No, don't say anything; it's arranged. You agree? Come!"

He actually seized her by the wrist and dragged her back with him.

"Here's the duchess!" he said, triumphantly.

And Lady Marchester, who was very quick in her mind, wept tears of joy.

"You darling brave thing!" she cried. "Oh, John, how clever of you!"

"How—how shall I play her?" asked Cynthia.

"Be yourself," said Sir John. "Stay! Can you sometimes be bitter, haughty, cold, reserved, sarcastic, and ironical? I told Bunter she was."

"I can try," said Cynthia, doubtfully.

"It's a mad plan," said Marchester. "What about the servants?"

"Invent a better," said Sir John. "I'll fix it up with Baines. Stay! Don't I hear a

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Klaxon horn? That bounder has the loudest screech in the kingdom."

They all heard Bunter's proclamation that he owned two collieries and an ironworks, had a daughter engaged to a baron's heir, and was just about to know a duchess.

"Now, keep your hair on," said Sir John to Cynthia. "The Duke's Christian name is Bill, those who kiss you call you Mary, those who shake hands comfortably say duchess, and the rest of the herd say your grace. Have you got it?"

"'YOU'RE THE DUCHESS,' SAID SIR JOHN. 'GOOD HEAVENS! I——'"

"Yes," said Cynthia, feebly, "but I'd like more time for study."

"You can't have it," said Sir John.

And in less than a minute Bunter and his daughter Celia were announced by Baines, who had had the surprise of his life in a thirty-seconds interview with Sir John.

"You understand, Baines?"

"Not in the least, Sir John, for I know her grace."

"Don't be a fool!" said Sir John. "You've got to pretend, and the rest of the household can be told the duchess was here for a rest under the name of Miss Hargreaves."

And when Bunter was introduced to the Duchess of Shetland, what he said was:—

"This is the proudest moment of your life, my grace—no, I mean this is the proudest moment of *my* life, your grace."

"So it is of mine," murmured Cynthia.

Tom Marchester surrendered Celia, who was a very pretty girl and as like her father as the Riviera to Mile End Road, for the requisite ceremony. The new duchess took to her instantly, and finding it a suitable and happy occasion for being rude in order to dissemble her stage-fright, turned her back on Bunter, who began to think Sir John was correct in spite of his gracious reception.

"My boy Harry, whom you were good enough to include in your invitation," he said to Lady Marchester, "will be here directly on a motor-bike. He's the painter, you know. Ah, there he is!"

And Tom Marchester, who knew the rising artist, went to the hall to meet the new guest, and a moment later Harry Bunter entered the room. He was as tall as his father, but not so gauntly determined to be rich. Modified by art, the Bunter stock had decided attractions. They all took to him at sight, but Cynthia did more. She took a step towards him, then gasped and stopped as he turned to her.

"What, you?" said Harry, in astonishment.

"Yes," said the duchess, feebly.

"Good heavens! Do you know her grace?" asked Bunter, in amazement.

"Her—her what?" asked Harry.

"Her Grace the Duchess of Shetland."

But Harry looked as if the sky had fallen.

"I—I didn't know she was that," he gasped.

"I—I hid it," said Cynthia, rapidly. "I was taking a rest at—at Scarborough, and Mr Bunter, whose name I never knew, gave me a lesson in water-colours—the best I ever had."

A general outburst of conversation, engineered by Sir John, covered up Cynthia's confusion and the obvious and odd gloom of Harry Bunter.

And presently the impresario had a little rest while the moral millionaire, his happy daughter, and an unhappy artist were inducted into their rooms. Then Sir John got hold of Cynthia.

"Here, what about this young Bunter? Are we going to slip up on that? Did he know who you were?"

"I never told him anything," said Cynthia.

"He's dead in love with you," said Sir John. "I saw it, and I'm afraid old Bunter saw it. You must be careful. Look, here's young Bunter coming now."

"Give me a minute or two with him," implored Cynthia.

"You'll keep your head?"

"Yes," said Cynthia.

And Sir John left the room as Harry came in.

"I never thought we should meet like this," said the artist. "I've hunted for you ever since. Why did you go without a word?"

"I had to," said Cynthia. "I was sent for in a great hurry."

"It was cruel, for I learned to love you," said Harry, desperately.

"Oh, but you see you mustn't!" said Cynthia.

"Why, why didn't you say you were a married duchess?" asked the artist.

"It—it didn't occur to me," said Cynthia.

And at that moment Lady Marchester and Celia came in, and they all drifted into the garden. In the meantime Bunter, who felt exhausted with success, went into the library and sat down. He was pleased with himself, and perhaps Providence was pleased with him. The telephone-bell rang.

"Halloa!" he said.

"Is that Marchester House?"

"Yes."

"Is the Duchess of Shetland there yet?"

"She is. Who are you?"

"I'm the duke. Who are you?"

"Good lord! I beg your pardon, my lord, your grace. I'm William Bunter, but I'll tell Lord Marchester."

"Say I'm coming over now. Do you hear?"

"Yes, your grace; delighted, I'm sure. Is there anything else?"

But there was no answer, and Bunter, with an ecstatic sigh, recognized that his first conversation with a duke had come to an end. Then he heard Sir John's whistle outside. He fairly ran to him.

"The duke's coming himself! I've just had a long talk with him over the 'phone."

Sir John looked as if he were stunned.

"Won't the duchess be delighted!" said Bunter. "They're such a devoted couple. Oh, may I tell her myself?"

Sir John took him by the sleeve.

"I must confide in you that things between them are, just now, owing to a most peculiar concatenation of complications, not wholly and exactly what they should be, though they may clear up at any moment."

He ran out and left Bunter staring.

By the proper employment of messengers and skilful diplomacy, Sir John extracted Marchester and Helen Marchester from the others and drew them into the morning-room.

"What is it?" said Marchester.

"Only a slight, a very slight complication," said Sir John, feverishly. "The duke is coming, and may be here any minute!"

"Oh, this is frightful!" said Lady Marchester, visibly turning pale.

"Now we *are* in the soup!" said Lord Marchester. "Your infernal ingenuity has done for us, Jack. You'd better let us have some more of it."

"It's not now a case for ingenuity," said Dunstan, walking rapidly up and down the room. "I shall, in this case, resort to honesty."

"I see. You'll appeal to him?" said Marchester.

"To accept Miss Hargreaves——"

"As his wife?" said Lady Marchester. "Oh dear, oh dear!"

And Marchester sat down and laughed till he cried. He made so much noise that they did not hear the duke's car. The door opened and Baines spoke solemnly.

"His Grace the Duke of Shetland."

"As soon as you can, leave him to me," said Sir John.

"Well, where's Mary?" asked the duke, rubbing his hands and looking very happy.

"I'll explain, duke," said Sir John.

"Explain?"

"Yes, yes, Bill," said Marchester; "we're in a difficulty."

"Do, *do* leave it to me!" said Sir John.

"Yes, dear, leave it to Sir John," said Lady Marchester.

And at this Marchester left the room, saying he heard someone coming. When the duke turned again to Sir John, Lady Marchester fled.

"Yes, yes, that's the point," said Sir John. "She's not here and she is!"

"Good lord! are you mad, Dunstan?" asked the duke.

"Not quite, but nearly," said Sir John, in a choking voice. "But listen! Marchester's a good chap, isn't he?"

"Splendid," said the duke: "but my wife——"

"And Lady Marchester—oh, wouldn't you do *anything* for her?"

"Anything," said the duke; "but——"

"They're on the verge of ruin, and you can save them. Let me explain."

"What's all this infernal preamble?" asked the duke. "My wife's here and not here! If you don't tell me quick, quick, where the duchess is, I'll wreck the house!"

"I will," said Sir John. "I'll be brief and absolutely plain. The duchess isn't here. She wrote to say she would come, and then she wired to say she couldn't."

"Good," said the duke, "that shows why she isn't here. Now concoct something to explain that she *is!*"

"Be patient and I will," said Sir John, "but I must first explain Bunter."

"Bunter, who's Bunter?" asked the duke.

"He owns two collieries and a gasworks, and is very rich. He *would* have the duchess here! He insisted on it. If she wasn't, the marriage was off."

"What marriage? Heaven grant me patience!" said the duke.

"Tom's," said Sir John. "I thought you knew all about it. Tom and Celia are engaged."

"Who is Celia, who is she?" demanded the duke.

"Bunter's daughter," said Sir John, hastily, "and so you see how it was. He would have the duchess, and she couldn't come, so I had a plan, not thinking you'd be here. It was all through Miss Cynthia Hargreaves being with us. Oh, she's delightful, perfect! I'm sure you won't mind."

"Mind what?" asked the Duke.

"Her being the duchess——"

The duke absolutely jumped.

"What? Say it again."

"I've been explaining it for ten minutes," said poor Sir John, "and here I'm doing the best I can for a most unhappy family, and I won't be bullied. I tell you again, as the duchess couldn't come, and as Bunter threatened to break off everything if she didn't, we implored Miss Hargreaves on our knees to pretend to be the duchess and to let Bunter be introduced to her as such."

And the duke sat down. He seemed to ponder a little. Presently he looked up at Sir John.

"Go over it all again," he said, sternly.

And as Sir John went over it the duke nodded at each repeated point.

"I see," he said; "grasp it now: this charming stranger is my wife. I wonder what Mary will say!"

"Is the duchess inclined to be jealous?" asked Sir John.

"Not at all," said the duke; "but——"

"She'll never hear of it," said Sir John; "never! I'll arrange it all. Why should she? You'll go to-morrow?"

"Hadn't I better go to-night?" asked the duke. "Mightn't there be complications?"

"I'll arrange everything," said Sir John, with rising confidence; "and as you're taking it so much better than I could have hoped, do a little more for us and clinch everything. Be nice to Bunter—oh, do be nice to Bunter!"

"I will be nice to Bunter," said the duke, "for everyone's sake."

"This is so good of you!" sighed Sir John. "For I thought the complications would be my death, and now that it's all smooth sailing I breathe again. Shall I introduce her?"

"I shall be charmed," said the duke, going to the window just as Cynthia came into view. The Duke put up his eyeglass.

"You are right, Dunstan. Let me be introduced to her grace as soon as possible."

"And that's Bunter," said Sir John, pointing.

"All of two collieries and a gasworks!" said the duke. "Must I really be nice to him?"

"Yes, do," said Sir John. "They're not coming in yet. I'll break it to her outside."

And while he was away the duke walked up and down the room and chuckled. He stopped when Cynthia entered the room with a charming colour in her cheeks and her eyes cast down. Sir John followed, and shut the door carefully.

"Come, we've very little time to cut to waste," he said, hurriedly, "but may I present Miss Hargreaves, duke?"

"Most delighted!" said the duke, and he shook hands with Cynthia, who felt like a tyro upon an unknown stage.

"How is it the duchess calls you, duke? Bill, isn't it?" asked Sir John.

"Bill and variations, with adjectives," said the Duke.

"You'll have to call him Bill, my dear," said Sir John.

"I'm afraid I can't get it out," said Cynthia. "I don't seem to be able to say the word."

"Do!" said the duke "I must call you Mary dear, because I'm absent-minded, and every time I want anything I say 'Mary dear.' Do you see?"

"Yes, your grace," said Cynthia.

"Yes, *Bill!*" said Sir John, savagely. "My dear, you don't catch the spirit of the thing in the way I expected."

"Do *I* catch the spirit of it?" asked the duke, who seemed to be catching it fast.

"Splendidly!" said Sir John. "I must have Bunter in now, at once."

"I think we might try," said the duke. "What do you say, dearest?"

"Now then, throw yourself into it!" said Sir John; and, with a gasp, Cynthia threw herself in.

"Yes, darling."

"Splendid," said Sir John, "rippin', couldn't be better! Now for old Bunter!"

And he went out. In a moment Cynthia chilled.

"Don't look like that," urged the duke. "They're coming; I hear them. Remember, now, we're devoted to each other! Give me your hand. I'll help Marchester, if we die of it!"

And when Sir John brought in the eager and rapturous Bunter the devoted ducal pair were found together on a couch.

"They've made it up already! A pretty picture of mutual devotion," said Bunter, in a loud whisper.

Sir John had told Bunter how to treat a duke, especially instructing him that it was not usual in society to draw open and obvious distinctions between a poor one and a rich one. Nevertheless, the knowledge that this one was not very rich gave Bunter some confidence. In two and a half minutes the duke knew Bunter owned two collieries and could have drawn distinctions between an ironworks and a gasworks. In five minutes Bunter confided in him his aspirations as to the Upper House. Bunter expressed an ardent curiosity to learn how the thing was done in the days of the duke's ancestors. The duke reflected.

"I believe the first baron robbed everyone and lent the results to the King," he said, after a pause. "And I believe the first duke found that the easiest way, too. After all, there's very little artistic difference between then and now, is there, Mr. Bunter?"

And Bunter, led away by warm reminiscences of many ruined competitors, actually winked. The duke yawned, and asked about his son.

"Ah, my boy Harry is an A.R.A.," said Bunter. "And, your grace, I *was* delighted to find out that he had met her grace.

The duke yawned and turned to Cynthia.

"Did he, dearest?" he asked, sweetly.

"Yes, Bill," said Cynthia.

"Where?"

"On the cliffs at Scarborough," said Cynthia. "But here is Mr. Harry Bunter. He was good enough to give me a lesson in water-colours."

"Water-colours! The deuce!—oh, yes," said the duke, who was aware the real duchess couldn't even paint her own face.

And Harry was dragged up by his father and presented to the duke, while Bunter explained, to his son's bitter wrath, how his clever boy's merits came to be recognized. During the harangue the duke got in a word with Cynthia.

"The young fellow looks very unhappy."

"Yes, yes," said Cynthia, feverishly. "Don't, don't be *too* fond of me when he's in the room! I'll explain everything later."

And before anything else could be said Sir John and Lord and Lady Marchester came into the room, looking much disturbed. Sir John was peculiarly pale.

"Is there anything wrong, Dunstan?" asked the duke. "Are you ill?"

"Has anything happened?" asked Cynthia.

"No, no," said Lady Marchester; "only Sir John *must* speak to the duke alone."

And Cynthia, rising to the occasion, suggested that Mr. Bunter and Harry should be shown the hothouses.

"Come," said the duke, when they had gone, "what's gone wrong now?"

"Well, the fact is——" began Sir John.

"It's all up!" groaned Marchester. "He'll never do it; and if he will, she won't!"

"She!—who's she?" asked the duke.

"The duchess, duke," said Sir John.

"Which?" asked the duke.

"The real one," said Marchester. "Oh, when I got the wire——"

"She—she's coming, after all," said Sir John. "We've just got a telegram. She's coming from Goring, and may be here any time!"

The duke whistled; Lord Marchester, with the air of a punctured balloon, subsided into a chair; and Sir John did a kind of fisherman's walk, two steps and overboard, between him and the couch.

"Now you *have* done it!" said the duke

"*We* have done it," said Sir John, hastily. "We acted for the best. What are we to do now?"

"We shall have to tell Bunter the truth," groaned Marchester.

"What!—and things going so well?" demanded Sir John.

"I don't know what you call well," said the duke, in despair. "It's evident you are a bachelor. Am I to tell Mary?"

Sir John seized what seemed an awful notion, and with his accustomed skill turned it with swift embroidery into a decorated plan.

"Exactly!" he exclaimed, "that's what must be done. She is a wide-minded woman, and devoted to Helen——"

"So she is," said Marchester, almost hopefully; "so she is!"

"And will do anything for her—anything!" said Sir John. "I may say for *us*, as we're all in it. She has, too, an engaging sense of humour, and has frequently expressed her desire to me to be someone of no importance. Now is her chance!"

"What the devil do you mean?" asked the duke.

"On one occasion," said Sir John, "I remember that she sighed, and said to me, 'Oh, if I could only be Mrs. Simpson, of Surbiton!'"

"And who's Mrs. Simpson, of Surbiton?" growled the duke.

"An imaginary person," said Sir John, "an ideal simple bourgeoise who does not live in state and is not for ever overcome by the heavy duties of a great position. When the duchess arrives I shall show her that now, now is her opportunity!"

"Very well," said the duke, "try it if you like. I'm in it up to my neck!"

"Leave it all to me," said Sir John, "I'll arrange everything. By Jove! was that a motor-horn?"

Undoubtedly it was.

"She's coming!" said Sir John. "Now, will you two go after the others and send Lady Marchester back here? Keep Bunter going; show him the kitchen garden, make him count the cabbages—anything, anything till I come to you! Oh, duke, this is splendid of you—splendid!"

But somehow the duke did not feel he was quite as splendid as Sir John seemed to think. He shook his head, looked at Sir John with a curiously doubtful expression, and went out murmuring "Mrs. Simpson, of Surbiton, damme!"

And when Lady Marchester came back she found Sir John instructing Baines, who listened patiently and made the baronet repeat what he had said.

"Have you got it now?" asked Sir John, impatiently.

"I hope so, Sir John," said Baines. But somehow he did not look as if he had. The next moment a car swept up to the door and Mary was in the arms of Helen.

"Isn't it good of me to come, after all?" said the real duchess.

"Splendid!" said Lady Marchester. "Here's Sir John Dunstan. You remember him?"

"Of course, of course," said the duchess, as she shook hands with destiny and did not know it.

"Come in," said Helen, "we have something to tell you."

"Is there something wrong?" asked Mary, anxiously.

"Yes," said Helen, "oh, yes!"

"Is it these wretched Bunters?" asked the duchess.

"Oh, oh, if you'd only come before we did it, Mary!" said Helen.

"Did what?" asked Mary.

"Oh, Jack, do explain, do!" said Helen. "It's all your doing, and you stand there saying nothing—nothing!"

"I should be *so* glad if you would explain, Sir John," said the duchess, sitting down.

"May I say your telegram this morning telling us you couldn't come, after all, put us in the most awful, awful difficulties?" asked Sir John.

"I'm sorry! Did it?" asked the duchess.

"Yes, yes; but let me explain," said Sir John. "Miss Hargreaves was staying here——"

"Was she? Who is she? Where is she?" asked the duchess.

"She was. She's a brilliant actress. She's in the kitchen garden," said Sir John.

"Yes, yes, with Mr. Bunter," said Helen, "and the Duke."

"And Bill!" said the duchess. "But what about her?"

"It was our only chance," said Sir John. "She could do it, being an actress."

"Could do what?"

"Be it. Be you," said Sir John.

"Me!" exclaimed her Grace.

"Yes, yes, you see it now," said Sir John. "Remember our most ghastly position, and all that hung upon your being here and our despair at your inability to come——"

"Tell me everything, or I shall go mad," said the duchess. "Be plain!"

"I will," said Sir John. "I introduced Miss Hargreaves to Mr. William Bunter as the Duchess of Shetland, and if you want me to go out into the hall and commit suicide I undertake to do it."

And for the space of twenty ticks of the big clock on the mantelpiece there was silence. Then the duchess burst into uncontrollable laughter, while Helen broke down into equally uncontrollable tears.

"And now is my chance to be Mrs. Simpson, of Surbiton!" said the duchess, looking at Sir John.

"Yes, yes," said Dunstan. "I see you remember. Oh, do, do, we implore you!"

And then the duchess started.

"But what about the Duke?" she asked, suspiciously.

"Ah, that was an awful complication!" said Sir John. "He heard you were here, and came over just too late, when it was done. He behaved nobly, nobly!"

"But how am I to treat him, then?" asked the duchess.

"Why, as—as Mrs. Simpson, of Surbiton, who knows him, and Miss Hargreaves in her new position, just a little," said Sir John.

"And you think all this will work?" asked the duchess.

"With your help, yes," replied Sir John.

"Then give me a minute alone with the Duke," said the duchess.

And at that moment the Duke came into the room. He went quickly to his wife.

"Don't come too close: I'm Mrs. Simpson," she said, coquettishly.

"Kiss me, dearest," said the Duke.

"No; you are devoted to your new duchess, so go away, Bill."

"Oh, do!" said Helen. "They're all coming in!"

When Lady Marchester introduced Mrs. Simpson to Cynthia and Bunter, Cynthia took to her amazingly and made her sit down by her on the couch. Bunter was not so much impressed.

"Mrs. Simpson? What Mrs. Simpson?" he asked Sir John.

"Mrs. Simpson, of—of Surbiton," said Sir John; "an admirable character, devoted to public duties, and a great friend of Lady Marchester's."

"Rather suburban to look at," said Bunter, who was disturbed at finding a commoner from Surbiton in such a house.

"Do you think so?" asked Sir John. "We don't. The duke thinks very highly of her."

The duke was bending down between his two wives and showing them much attention.

"But she didn't know the duchess," said

"THE DUKE WHISTLED; LORD MARCHESTER, WITH THE AIR OF A PUNCTURED BALLOON, SUBSIDED INTO A CHAIR."

Bunter. "My view is that no man should know any lady his wife doesn't. My poor dear wife made that a rule."

"As a general thing, it's a good rule," said Sir John, warmly—"a rule I should certainly follow if I were married. But, by the way, what about business?"

"I'll fix up everything to-morrow," said the colliery owner. "My solicitor will be down by an early train with all the papers. You've done your part and I'll do mine. Business is business, isn't it?"

"I hope so," said Sir John. "Have you ever taken any interest in the theatre?"

"I've taken stalls," said Bunter, "and have frequently been shocked."

"I'm going to run one in town," said Sir John. "Morally managed, there's a gold-mine in it."

"You don't say so?" said Bunter. "A moral gold-mine?"

"Yes; and the duke's in it with me," said Sir John.

"The duke!" said Bunter, with awe. "You don't say so?"

"And as keen as mustard," said Sir John, who had really induced the duke to put a hundred pounds into the syndicate which was to run Cynthia. Sir John had told him it was the least he could do for his new wife.

"I'd rather like to be in somethin' with his grace," said Bunter—"just a thousand or so."

"I'll think it over," said Sir John, coolly, "and speak to him about it."

It was when the party split up after tea that Sir John had his work cut out.

"Where the deuce am I to sleep?" asked the duke.

"Your room is next the duchess's," said Sir John.

"Which?" asked the duke, savagely.

"Both," said the manager of men. "Mrs. Simpson is in the pink room, the other in the green room, and you in the blue, between."

"I'm blue enough," said the duke. "What does that infernal Bunter keep his eye on me and Mary for?"

"Hush! Say Mrs. Simpson," said Sir John. "Do be careful in the passages and so on. He's so moral!"

"Hang his morality!" said the duke. "How long is this to last?"

"Only till to-morrow, duke," said Sir John; "but there, Baines is signalling to me. I must go. Pray, pray be careful!"

It was all very well to tell the duke to be careful, but when a rather casual man, subject to fits of absent-mindedness and exceedingly fond of his wife, has to treat her as a humble friend from the despised suburbs of London, he may easily make a mistake. And Sir John couldn't always be at his elbow. But all the same it was the time of Sir John's life, for, though the position was precarious, he had that sense of power and skill which comes to a capable mountaineer on some icy, knife-edged, impossible *arête*. He survived the high perils of the hours from tea-time to dinner and, to vary the metaphor, piloted his haphazard and incongruous fleet through all the shoals and unmarked dangers of dinner-time. He made Bunter talk of coal, kept Harry on the sad side of art, encouraged the duke to behave by actually kicking his shins, and saved Cynthia nobly when she gave herself away in the tangle of general talk.

When dinner was over, Sir John sighed, but he had little peace. Although the duke was a sober man, on this exciting occasion he took rather more than he should. Baines, who was highly nervous, filled his glass recklessly. Harry, who was frightfully miserable, also seemed reckless. In the drawing-room Sir John got them to play bridge, but was forced into it himself as the lovers retired into the conservatory. Cynthia and Harry Bunter played chess, or pretended to, and at the card-table the duke and Mrs. Simpson were opposed to Sir John and Marchester. When the game was over, Harry got up and went out into the library and sat down considering whether he should cut his own throat or Cynthia's or the duke's. Just as he had arrived at the conclusion that it was his own for choice Cynthia came into the room, and seeing no one there sat down with a heavy sigh. Harry jumped up from his chair and came to her.

"Oh!" said Cynthia.

"This—this is all impossible!" said Harry. "I'm a fool! I shall go away! I can't stand it any more! I love you too much!"

"Do you? Do you?" asked Cynthia. "Oh, but you mustn't—at least, not under present circumstances! It wouldn't be honourable! I think I shall faint!"

What could any ardent lover do but support her? Harry did a man's duty, and Cynthia sobbed upon his shoulder. But suddenly she felt him start.

"Great heavens, the duke!" said Harry. They turned, and saw his Grace in the doorway in a kind of brown study. He looked up.

"I—I beg your pardon," he said, "I'm so sorry."

And only when he had spoken did he awake to the full value of what he had seen and its bearing on the general situation. He burst into laughter, turned, went out and shut the door.

"Good heavens!" said Harry, "he doesn't love you!"

"No, no," said Cynthia, "not at all. Or—not much."

"Don't dukes care for their wives?" asked Harry, wildly.

"I know so little, so very little of him," said Cynthia. "I really believe that Mrs. Simpson knows him better, much better! Don't tell anyone I said so. It's so dishonourable of me, but I feel quite mad!"

"Yes, yes, so do I," said Harry. "You were in my arms!"

"That's true," said Cynthia.

"And your husband saw it and laughed!"

"So—so the duke did," said Cynthia.

"Will he divorce you if—if ——"

"If what?" asked Cynthia.

"If you run away with me?"

Harry looked desperate.

"Hush! hush! Who's that coming?" said

Cynthia, springing away from him and standing close to the fire. And the door opened, disclosing Mrs. Simpson.

"Have you by any chance seen the duke, duchess?" she asked, pleasantly. "I want to get him to do something for me."

"He came in a moment ago and went out again," said Cynthia; "didn't he, Mr. Bunter?"

"Yes, duchess," said Harry. "He—he went out again."

And as Mrs. Simpson sat down at the writing-desk, Sir John opened the door and looked in.

"We want you two for a round game," said Sir John.

"A round game?" asked Cynthia.

"Yes, we're all in it," said Sir John, who didn't want her and Harry alone together if he could help it.

"I'll come directly," said Mrs. Simpson.

"Yes, do," said Sir John, as he held the door open for Cynthia and smiled pleasantly on Harry, whose looks were dreadful to see. And no sooner were they gone than the duke came in by the window. He laughed tremendously in a quiet way, and going up behind the lady from Surbiton kissed her with great devotion.

"AND THAT WAS THE TERRIBLE SIGHT THAT MET BUNTER AS HE CAME INTO THE LIBRARY."

And that was the terrible sight that met Bunter as he came into the library.

"Now we're in the soup!" said the Duke. "Ah, Mr. Bunter, are you tired of cards?"

"Your grace, I'm horrified—horrified!" he said.

"At what?" asked the duke, as Mrs. Simpson sat down.

"At what I saw!" said Bunter. "At what I couldn't help seeing."

"What did you see?"

"I saw you kiss this lady from Surbiton, with the duchess in the very next room!" said Bunter. "I shall do my duty!"

"And perhaps you'll regret it, Mr. Bunter," said the duke, without inquiring what Mr. Bunter's duty might be.

"No!" said Bunter, sternly; "I shall tell Sir John and leave him to tell Lord and Lady Marchester what is going on in their house."

The door opened at that very moment and Sir John came in.

"Ah, here you all are!" he said, cheerfully. He looked at them, and his face elongated. "What's the matter now?"

"Dreadfulness is the matter," said Bunter, earnestly. "I can't stay in this house, Sir John! So long as I had no more than my suspicions I could put up with it. But now I know all!"

"All—all!" gurgled Sir John, pallidly.

"Everything," said Bunter. "I've been deceived in my views as to the upper classes."

"You know who this lady is?" asked Sir John, indicating Mrs. Simpson, of Surbiton.

"Yes," said Bunter, "I know only too well."

"Forgive me, forgive us!" said Sir John. "I did it for the best."

"You did it for the best?" said Bunter. "What *do* you mean? I tell you I saw his grace kiss—kiss Mrs. Simpson!"

And Sir John, overcome by the narrowness of his own escape from giving himself and everyone away, fell into a chair.

"If Mrs. Simpson and his grace will leave us, I will explain everything," he said.

"My dear Bill," said Mrs. Simpson, "I've got a plan. I can arrange everything—everything."

"What's your plan?" said Sir John, jealously.

"This," said Mrs. Simpson. "Suppose the duke and duchess asked Mr. Bunter to bring his daughter to their castle and have the marriage from there, wouldn't it be very—very nice and advantageous for—for everyone?"

Oh!" said Bunter, as he envisaged the gorgeous social advantages so skilfully dangled before his eyes by this immoral lady.

"Let the duchess offer that," said Bunter, with a gasp. "and I'll leave it to my boy. Bring 'em in. If no one is ashamed, I'm not."

And Sir John, throwing the door open, summoned the others, Lord and Lady Marchester, Cynthia and Harry.

"Is it true your grace would like me and Celia and my boy to come and stay with you and have the marriage from your castle?" asked Bunter of Cynthia.

Cynthia looked desperately for help, and Sir John, keeping behind Bunter, nodded furiously.

"I—I should be delighted," she said.

"Is Mrs. Simpson to be there?" asked Bunter, sternly; and again Sir John signalled acquiescence, and contorted his face with what he meant to be eagerly acquiescent smiles.

"I should just love her to come," said Cynthia, puzzled, but smiling as well as she could.

"You don't know everything," said Bunter, solemnly. "I saw the duke—yes, yes. I will speak—I saw the duke *kiss* her!"

"Yes, sir," said his grace, "I *did* kiss Mrs. Simpson."

"Dreadful!" said Bunter, "very dreadful!"

"And I also saw Mr. Harry Bunter kiss the duchess," said the duke.

"Kiss her grace—kiss her grace!" Bunter stammered. "Harry, Harry, what does this mean? Your grace, is it true?"

"Let me speak," said Harry. "I met her grace without knowing who she was at Scarborough, and I loved her; I adored her, and she fled! Now I know why."

"Oh, no, you don't!" said Sir John—"oh, no, you don't!"

But the duke turned to Harry and uttered remarkable words.

"My dear Mr. Bunter, don't look so unhappy. I sympathize with you deeply and assure you there is no need to despair."

And before anybody else recovered breath to speak Mrs. Simpson intervened.

"Come! Would you all be so good as to leave the room and let me have five minutes alone with the senior Mr. Bunter?" she said, graciously.

Without a single word the others left the room to the colliery owner and Mrs. Simpson.

"I quite love your daughter," said Mrs. Simpson. "I want to see her happy. And Tom is a darling. They will make an ideal couple."

"I begin to think not," said Bunter, fiercely.

"I'm certain of it," said Mrs. Simpson, "and a marriage from the ducal castle is, you must admit, something to look forward to from the social point of view. Consider it arranged."

"I have to thank the duchess for that, if it comes off," said Bunter.

"Thank me," said Mrs. Simpson "*I* am the duchess."

Bunter sat down and got up again.

"Say it again," said Bunter.

"*I* am the duchess," said Mrs. Simpson.

"And not Mrs. Simpson, of Surbiton?" demanded Bunter, wildly.

"Where is Surbiton?" asked Mrs. Simpson.

"I don't understand," said Bunter. "Have I—have I been deceived?"

"For your own—no, I mean everyone's good," said the real Duchess. "You wanted me here, and I agreed, and when it seemed that I couldn't come, after all, it occurred to Sir John (such a dear, clever man!) that this other lady would do."

"Do! It's I've been done!" said poor Bunter. "I've been treated badly, your grace, and I don't think Sir John at all nice. I've been deceived."

"No, you've not; I'm here," said the Duchess, sweetly. "And oh, Mr. Bunter, think of the happiness of your son, who adores the lady you believed the duke's wife! Now, now he will be happy!"

"Could—could *they* be married from your castle too?" asked Bunter, eagerly.

"Consider it settled," said the Duchess, graciously.

"And you'll forgive me for what I said?" asked Bunter, humbly.

"Say no more," said her grace, rising. "You've made me and everyone happy. Let us relieve their natural anxiety."

But when Bunter opened the door for her it was obvious that Sir John had told the truth to Harry and Cynthia, who was sobbing with joy on the artist's shoulder while Lady Marchester patted her on the back. The duke, Marchester, and Sir John were the first to see the lady from Surbiton.

"Ah, my plan has worked!" said Sir John, joyfully, as he noted the subdued condition of the moralist and the triumph on the real duchess's face.

"Splendidly, splendidly!" she said, laughing. "Mr. Bunter and I are great friends. Bill, dear, pray offer your congratulations to your late consort while I offer mine to Mr. Harry Bunter."

But what Sir John said was:—

"By Jove! didn't I do it well?"

CURIOSITIES.

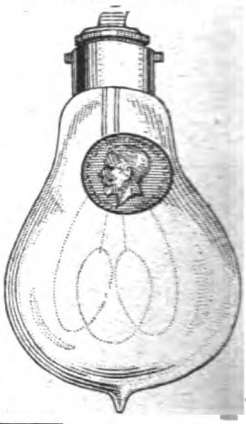
[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

"HELLO, DADDY!"

THE picture known as "Hello, Daddy!" which has smiled its way into thousands of homes by reason of its association with Messrs. Fry, has been the subject of many amusing caricatures—which in itself is a tribute to its popularity. The phrase "Hello, Daddy!" is one which readily lends itself to the purpose, and of the many attempts we have seen none has been more amusing than the accompanying drawing by F. G. Lewin, the humour of which cannot fail to appeal to our readers.

WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION?

EIGHT of us had picked sides for a game of skittles. The captain took a penny from his pocket and flicked it in the air for "first throw." An ordinary electric bulb hung above, about nine feet from the floor. The penny, flicked with force, struck the bulb and remained—adhered, as it were, to the side, as shown in the accompanying sketch. I begged the others to let it remain whilst I examined such a strange happening, and did so by means of a step-ladder. On coming down after inspecting it, I suggested that the penny should be photographed. Another member of the team, however, out of curiosity, could not refrain from touching the penny with a match-stick, and it fell to the ground, the bulb at the same time exploding with a loud report, blowing the glass into thousands of fragments. Such an unusual and curious occurrence, vouched for by eight men, is, I think, sufficiently interesting for your "Curiosities" page.—Mr. Geo. H. Lamacraft, 28, Fore Street, Bovey Tracey.



Bridge Problem.

BY ERNEST BERGHOLT.

Hearts—Queen, 8.
Clubs—10, 8.
Diamonds—Ace, knave, 6.
Spades—9.

Hearts—None.
Clubs—Knave, 9, 5, 4.
Diamonds—King, queen, 8, 4.
Spades—None.

B
Y Z
A

Hearts—10, 9.
Clubs—7, 6.
Diamonds—9, 7.
Spades—10, 7.

Hearts—7, 6, 4.
Clubs—King.
Diamonds—10, 5.
Spades—Knave, 6.

There are no trumps, and A has the lead. A B are to win six out of the eight tricks against any possible defence.

(The solution will be given next month.)

Solution to Last Month's Puzzle.

"WHAT IS IT?"

THE answer is: A pack of cards, the indications being:—

1. The vague references in the subject-matter.

2. The specific references to clubs, hearts, diamonds (riches), and spades.

3. The actual names of the thirteen cards of a suit, concealed, one near the beginning of each line (except the last), thus:—

Line 1. A CEdar . . . Line 2. YeT WOuld . . . Line 3. BoTH REEking . . . etc., etc., to Line 13. KINGs . . .

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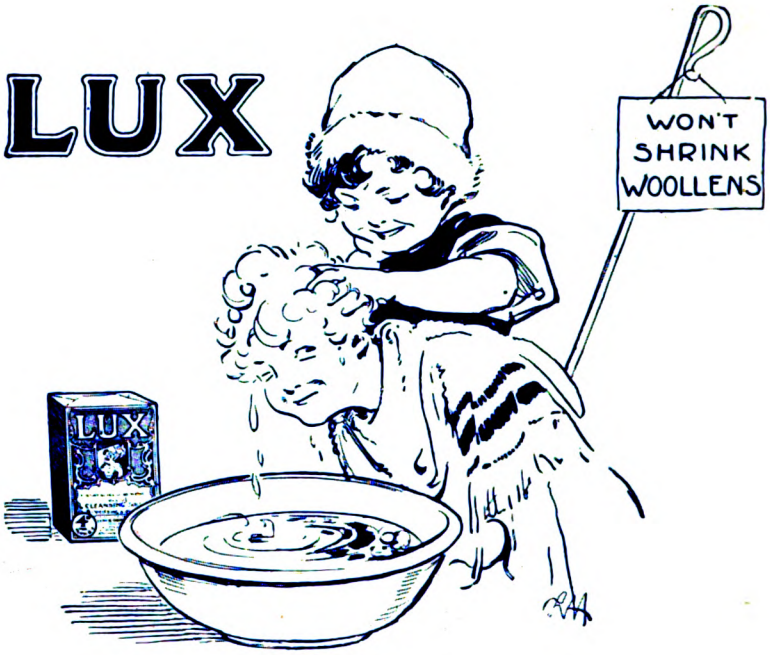

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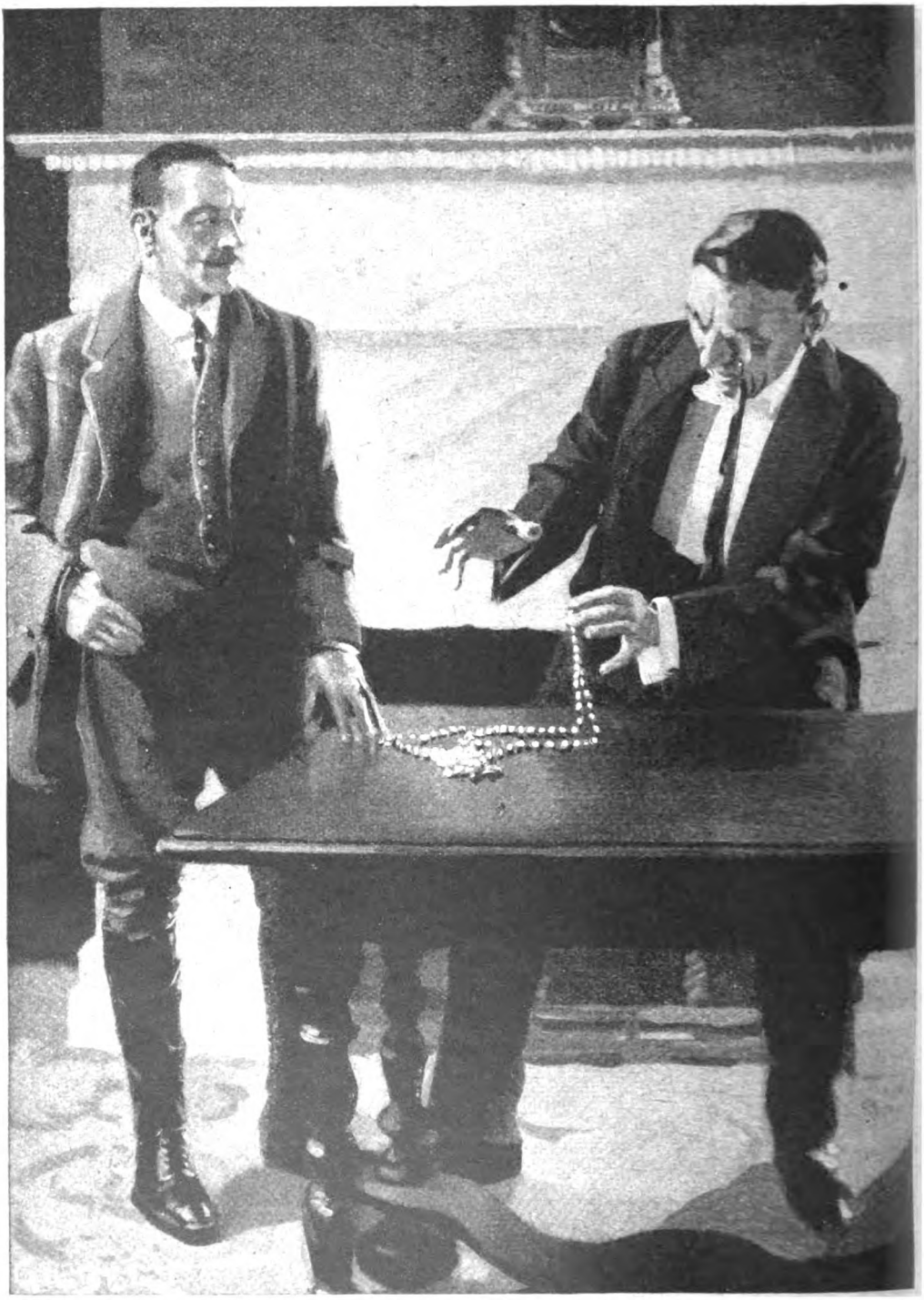

"HE STOOPED SUDDENLY OVER THE TABLE WITH AN ABRUPT, EAGER GESTURE, HIS MONOCLE IN HIS EYE, HIS FINGERS SLIPPING OVER THE JEWELS LIKE A MISER'S OVER A HOARD OF GOLD PIECES."

(*See page* 331.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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LORD WINTON'S ADVENTURE.

By MELVILLE DAVISSON POST.

Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

LORD WINTON sent away the horse and let himself in. It was midnight. After Northridge's dinner he had changed his clothes and gone for a last ride in the Park. He loved horses and smart women.

It was a narrow house in Park Lane. The servants had been packing all day; they were tired, and Lord Winton had sent them to bed when he went out. The house looked empty, but for the heavy furniture and paintings. There was a wood fire in the library. Lord Winton stood with his back to the fire.

He had gone the usual course of young men in his class, somehow through the Public School on the Hill, the University, and then to a smart regiment with a year or so in the East; after that came his uncle's rise to power and his turn into the diplomatic service. An assignment to the English Embassy in America was not precisely the post which Lord Winton would have chosen. Now that he was about to leave London the appointment annoyed him. He stood before the fire in his riding-clothes, his legs apart, his hands behind him.

He was a young, blond Englishman. He had blue eyes, brown hair that grew thick and close all over his head—brushed back sleek like the coat of a seal—and a bronze moustache. He shifted his position before the fire, bending his legs at the knee, and lifting his body with a sort of jerk.

Washington would be dull. There would be hardly any decent sport in America. One might find some hunting country, here and there, but it would be a sort of club thing, And in certain fashionable colonies—Newport. for example—there would be smart women. Here was a bright spot in this reflection. Lord Winton had met smart women from these "colonies." He smiled at the memory, disclosing his fine, white, even teeth under the bronzed moustache. They were awfully smart, these American women, and devilishly clever.

He was in this reflection when a cab stopped before the house and someone came up the steps. He went out and opened the door. A huge man entered. His opera hat and his loose topcoat added to the outlines of his bulk. The visitor bowed and murmured an apology for disturbing Lord Winton at this hour. The tones of his voice were low and soft, and his English sentences selected and precise. Lord Winton was very greatly surprised. His words were exclamations of amazement.

"Mahadol! You in London! My word!"

The big man removed his hat, coat, and gloves. These, together with his stick, he laid on the table. Then he smiled.

One could not say to what race the man belonged. His face had the profound introspection of a Yogi dreamer, but the eyes and the broad, low forehead were Mongolian. The man was some sort of blend. He could not be identified with any precise race. He seemed to have the strong features of many peoples with their weaknesses left out. He was very carefully dressed in the best evening clothes one could buy in Bond Street. And in these

English clothes he looked like the type of some strange, new, dominating race. Lord Winton continued to regard the man with astonishment.

"Mahadol!" he repeated, as though the appearance of the man were something beyond belief. "I haven't seen you since the old regimental days in Bombay. Come in. Sit down."

He led the way into the library, pulled out a big chair by the table, and took up his old position before the fire. The big Oriental sat down, his bulk filling the chair. He did not speak for some moments. He looked perplexed and embarrassed. He seemed to watch Lord Winton, who stood bending his knees and lifting his body with a little bounce.

The Englishman was surprised to see the man who had come in, and he wondered why he should come after midnight and at this time. But he was not disturbed about it. He was never disturbed about anything—except, perhaps, good horses and smart women.

He knew Dang Mahadol. Everybody, everywhere, knew Dang Mahadol. He "roosted," as Lord Winton would have put it, "in Bombay, and flapped all over the rotten East—pecking about for twinklers." In fact, the man was the greatest dealer in precious stones in the world. When one gave an order to Pool in London, Hausman in Paris, or Vanderdyk in Amsterdam, it went straight to Dang Mahadol in Bombay—if the order were for Oriental jewels at over a thousand pounds. Dang Mahadol sat in the gate of the East like a joss before the treasures of a pagoda. One could not get by him. One traded with Mahadol direct or paid another profit to Pool, Hausman, or Vanderdyk.

Lord Winton slapped his hands and held the palms out to the fire. He bounced his body with the characteristic gesture.

"I'm off to-morrow," he said. "Nice of you to pop in. What's up?"

The Oriental had a single eyeglass in an exquisite shell rim hanging to a broad silk ribbon. He touched it with his hand as though embarrassed.

"Lord Winton," he said, "I have something on my conscience."

He paused. Then he went on:—

"I learned that you were going out to America to-morrow, and I determined to lay the matter before you and request your assistance."

He moved with a sort of undulation, as though to permit his huge body to flow out and fill the chair. Lord Winton slapped his riding-breeches with his hand.

"Certainly," he said, "Mahadol, anything I can do—charmed."

He was not charmed; he was puzzled. "What's the rum beggar driving at?" he thought.

The big Oriental made the shadow of a servile gesture.

"I am obliged by your courtesy," he said. "I became involved in this matter through no fault of my own. The thing has been long delayed. But America is six thousand miles from Bombay, and I am old and hate the sea."

He remained silent for several moments. Then he went on:—

"It was a strange adventure, Lord Winton."

The big Oriental stopped abruptly. Lord Winton suddenly regarded him with a profound interest. He could understand adventures. Old Dang Mahadol flapping about the rotten East must have knocked into all sorts. If the thing he came in about was a strange adventure to him, it must be something extraordinary. He got a chair and sat down by the hearth, the toe of a riding-boot thrust out toward the fire.

"Have a cigarette, Mahadol," he said. "In the metal tray. Sorry there is nothing to drink. Everybody's turned in but myself."

The Oriental got up with the swift, easy motion of a Japanese wrestler, and presented the tray to Lord Winton.

"Alcohol is death in the East," he said. "I never touch it. But if you will pardon me, Lord Winton, I will smoke a native cigarette. I grow old and attached to trifles."

Lord Winton took the tray and placed it on the hearth. The Oriental returned quickly to his chair. He seemed again to flow into it as though his body were soft and viscous. He got a brown cigarette out of a vellum box, lighted it, and became almost instantly unmoving, except for the hand that carried the cigarette to his lips. For a good while he was like a figure in metal: one of those heavy deities that sit before the temples of the Far East. Then suddenly he began to speak.

"I was coming up from the Malay Peninsula. I was ill and I came by sea. I hate the sea. It was a boat of the English Trading Company. It put in at Rangoon. You know the coast of Burma; mud extending into the water, fringed toward the land with *kaing* grass. It was sunset when we got up the river to Rangoon. The monsoon rains were hardly over, and the whole place steamed. You know the grey, hot, abominable steam that the sun draws out of the mud of Burma."

He paused.

"It is no place for a white man. One must have immunity in his blood for a good many hundred years to live in Burma. There are two poisonous places on the map of Asia. Rangoon's one of them. It's a city of crows. They are everywhere, like the dogs in Constantinople and the flies in Port Said. And always at sunset they leave the city. Everybody was on deck just then, at sunset, watching the innumerable black creatures struggle up out of the grey steam and flap off into the jungle. The steam seemed full of them. They battled out of it by the thousand, like devil-creatures getting clear of the pit. Everybody was watching the crows struggling under the steam.

"Just then an old Cingalese boatman approached the white men on the deck. He was making the *shikoh* with his palms together pointing toward the man he addressed, and he was whining in two or three dialects and some English words. Nobody paid any attention to him. But I caught what he said and beckoned him to me.

"He was incredibly old. One never knows how old man can be in any other country but Asia. I got out of him that a white man was dying somewhere down under the steam that the crows were struggling out of, and he wanted to see a *gentleman*. That was the one English word that the Cingalese had correctly. He kept returning to it. I saw that the word had been forced on his attention. Somebody had taken a good deal of trouble about the word. The Cingalese clung to it as though it were the key to a formula."

Mahadol stopped abruptly. Lord Winton was listening with attention. He did not read books, and for this reason, perhaps, he had the fresh, consuming interest of a child for a story. The fire glowed. The sounds in the City seemed remote. The big Oriental went on:—

"I saw no white man would go with him, so I went. I hate the sea. I was glad to get on the earth for an hour or two. The steamer did not go out until morning. It was taking on a cargo from the *godowns*. Midnight might see it clear. I was free until then, and I was not afraid of the steam. Fever neglects me. I got into the boat and the Cingalese took me ashore. He was skilful and inconceivably strong for a mere dried wisp of a creature. The river is like ink and rapid; not rapid like a Western river. I mean rapid as though it boiled; as though it were a pot of ink with a fire under it. The steam would convince you. I actually touched the water to see if it were hot."

He paused and twisted the black silk ribbon to his single eyeglass.

"I always go to see broken men," he said, "if they're white. I have learned a great deal—a great deal of value—from men slipping into the pit. A white man is not a liar at the end; the truth comes out of him. I always go."

Lord Winton continued to listen, and the Oriental went on:—

"All at once it was dark. I could see nothing. I knew the Cingalese was beating along the edge of the river around the piling. Finally he stopped by a wall. The boat grated against the stones and I got out. It was a paved court of some character. They are common in Rangoon. The Cingalese fastened his boat and went ahead into an abandoned pagoda. He had taken it over. He was in it with the rats"—the Oriental hesitated—"and the man I had come to see.

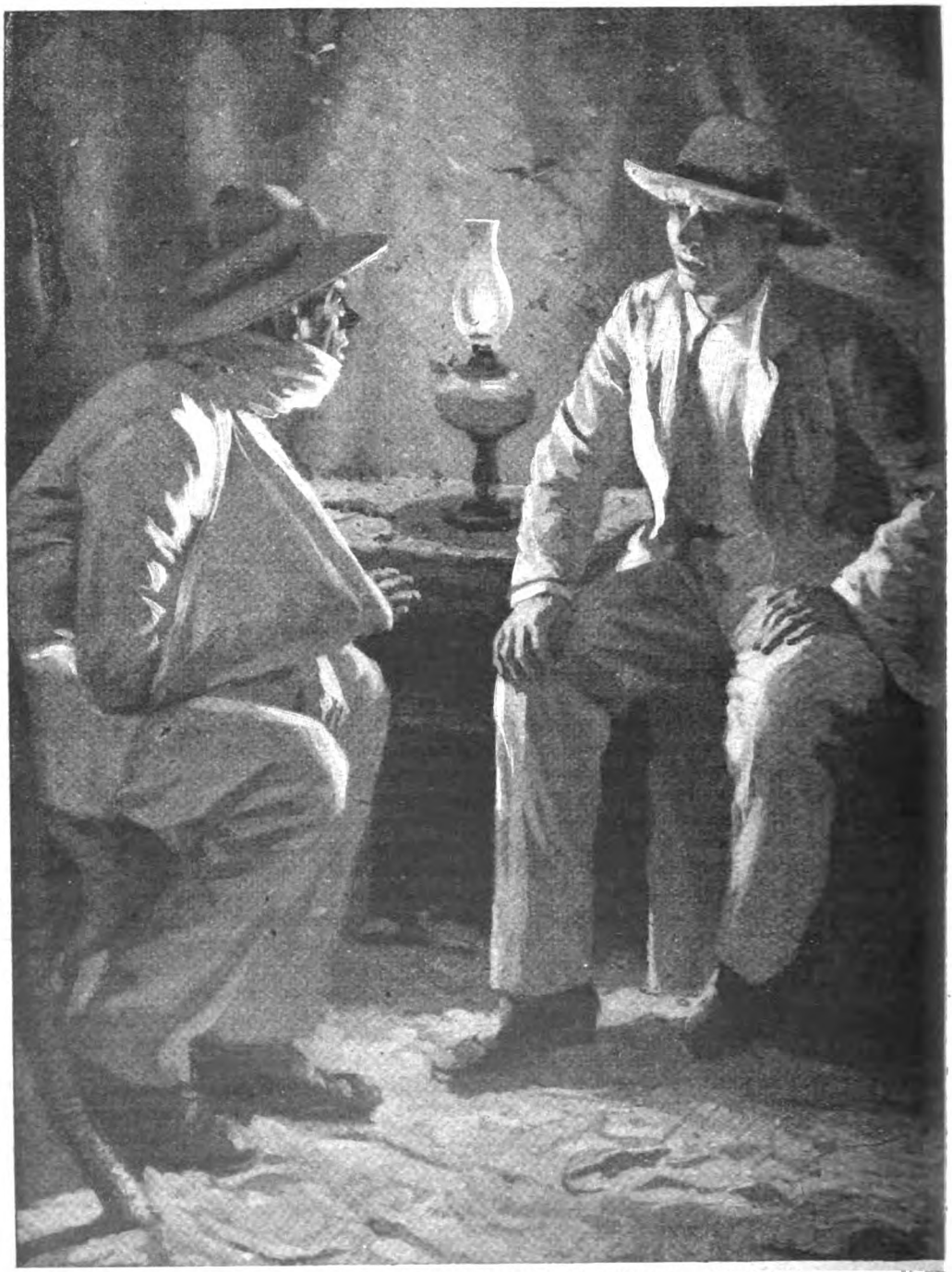
"A part of the old temple had been curtained off with some rotten sail-cloth. We went in under a flap. There was a table in the middle of the room made of packing-cases, and an old steamer-chair stolen from an English ship. There was also a bench. There was a cheap German lamp on the table. That's all there was in the place—except the man."

He got another cigarette out of his vellum box and twisted it about in his fingers, but he did not immediately light it.

"I never saw anybody like the Englishman in the steamer-chair on the other side of the packing-box table. He looked like some dying creature that the crows had been after when the steam forced them out. Death was on him; a horror of death. His right arm was bandaged out to the ends of his fingers; there was a cloth around his throat coming up over the point of his chin and tied back; his helmet covered the top of his head to the eyes. I knew what was the matter with him. He had the Monks' Plague. It's one of the treasures of the Khan monasteries in the Gobi Desert. Western science never heard of it, and I doubt if any other white man ever had it. It's a ghastly, loathsome, creeping horror. They call it the Black Rot in Asia, and the name's right."

The Oriental went on:—

"There was one thing about the white man that impressed me. He was shaven and he was clean. Even in that den with the rats and the dirty Cingalese he had somehow managed it. I knew then why the old boatman clung so persistently to his English word.



"HE WAS TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT I COULD BE TRUSTED. DYING MEN HAVE A SORT OF UNCANNY JUDGMENT."

"The man was profoundly disappointed when he saw me. I sat down on the bench. He put out his uninjured hand and pushed the German lamp over to my side of the table. He wanted to get the light on my face.

"He peered at me a long time, then he leaned back. I knew what the man was

trying to do. He was trying to decide whether or not I could be trusted. Dying men have a sort of uncanny judgment. I never knew one to be entirely wrong. There's something primordial and organic in the dread one has to measure under a dying man's estimate. Everybody feels it. I don't care of what race he is. I have seen a Malay pirate carry a Swiss watch two hundred miles to a missionary in the Peninsula because a dying man sent him with it. If that man had been on his feet, in health, the Malay would have cut his throat and put the watch in his pocket."

Mahadol stopped again. He lighted the cigarette; then he went on:—

"I don't know what the man concluded; whether he could trust me, or whether it was simply the only chance he had. At any rate, he made up his mind about it.

"'Do you go to America?' he said.

"I replied that America was five thousand miles from Bombay, and that I never went.

"'London, then?'

"'Yes,' I replied, 'sometimes to London; not often.'

"The man drew the lamp back across the table.

"'You can manage it from London,' he said.

"Then he began to speak in the guttural whisper that goes along with the plague. And all the time he kept peering at me; staring at me; searching my face like a child trying to read a puzzle. It's not a pleasant experience, Lord Winton, to have a child or a man, with death on him, trying to find out if one is honest."

The huge Oriental had scarcely moved except to twist the eyeglass or to finger the brown cigarette. Now he put his hand suddenly into the pocket of his dinner-coat, took out something thick, bulky, and loose, and put it on the table under the cover of his hand. He did it swiftly with the quick motion of a Japanese athlete. His big hand, bowed up with the fingers closed, covered the thing on the table. He kept his hand there, over it, and went on. Lord Winton regarded him with astonishment, but he made no comment. What the man was saying had the fascination of a wonder-tale and it held him. He got another cigarette out of the tray on the hearth, lighted it, and waited. Mahadol went on:—

"The Monks' Plague of the Khan monasteries is a loathsome horror. The whole of the rotten sail-cloth walls were covered with soft, pudgy, repulsive creatures, gaudy moths, and butterflies of an evil, poisonous beauty. Dirty lizards darted about. They crawled over the packing-box table and around the German lamp."

There is this gain in never having read a book—that one's imagination is not clouded. Its vigour and sharp outlines remain. Lord Winton could see the essentials of the pictures as clearly as a child. The black mud of Burma; the crows struggling in the steam; and below that, an abandoned human creature dying in a square of light enclosed with a wall of rotten sail-cloth creeping with vermin. He saw it as a child sees the outlines of a wonder-story, directly, like one looking on.

The big Oriental was in one of his periods of silence. The brown cigarette lay on the table near his hand; the big, unmoving hand bowed like a cup over the thing beneath it. His whole body had the immobility of some heavy fluid at rest.

"It was a cruel effort for the dying Englishman to speak," he began, suddenly, as though there had been no break in his words. "But he finally got out what he wanted to tell—what he wanted to tell a man of honour—before the Monks' Plague rotted him into something for the crows."

Mahadol paused and looked at Lord Winton.

"The voice hardly ever got out of a whisper. The light was dim and I could see only a little of the man's face between the rim of his helmet and the cloth that came around the point of the chin. He moved hardly at all, as though he were afraid his disintegrated body might fall to pieces."

Lord Winton was listening intently. The big Oriental went on:—

"The man had been in command of a training submarine in the English Navy. One day, off Portsmouth harbour, as the submarine was coming up, its tower was struck by the hull of a patrol boat. The submarine went down. They blew the tanks, put on all the power of the engines, and finally got to the surface. But they could not keep on the surface. The submarine began immediately to sink. And suddenly, overcome by the fear of death, this man opened the hatch to the tower and jumped into the sea. The boat filled through the open door and went under."

There was profound silence. The Oriental seemed to reflect; then he continued:—

"The Englishman was picked up, tried by a court martial, and dismissed from the Service. But the sea had not finished with him. He took passage for America, determined to disappear out of human knowledge.

"It was a huge liner crowded with people.

One night, four hundred miles east of Newfoundland, on the North Atlantic track, an extraordinary thing happened. It was a brilliant night, the sea was as clear as glass. There was hardly a ripple. It was about ten o'clock. The passengers were all on the main deck in evening dress at the captain's ball. He said that the deck was crowded with women. It was a fashionable liner. The smartest women in America were aboard. They had stocked their wardrobes in Paris.

"The man with the Monks' Plague dying, in the square of light, in the steaming hole in Rangoon, said that the captain's ball that night was the most brilliant social affair that he had ever seen in the world. He said the deck was like a floor and the whole sea clear to the eye, when suddenly there was a jar and a creeping shudder ran along the whole length of the liner. The passengers paid no particular attention. They thought it was some jar of the engines. But the officers knew better; they knew that the liner had struck a field of submerged ice.

"The man said that he put on a stoker's jacket and overalls and followed the officers below. He was amazed at the injury to the ship. The whole side of the liner from stem to stern on the starboard side was ripped just as a sheet of cast-iron is ripped by a steel tool in a machine-shop. The plates were cut; every bulkhead was opened; the sea was pouring in. He saw in an instant that the liner was doomed.

"He hurried back to the deck. Wireless calls were sent out. The boats were lowered and the officers began to take off the passengers. The Englishman, continuing to wear the stoker's jacket and overalls, helped the officers. At that time he had perfect control of himself. He saw that the boats would hardly hold the women and children. There was no chance for anybody else. But this thing did not impress him.

"Then he heard a woman screaming somewhere under the decks, and he went to bring her up. He was two decks down, he said, when suddenly all the lights on the liner went out, and it was wholly and inconceivably dark. The darkness, he said, seemed thick and palpable, and to envelop and press him like an invisible thing having dimensions and weight. And all at once the ship became a place of horror.

"He could hear the sea pouring in; the woman far away under the deck below him screaming in mortal terror; wild, eerie, unearthly, insane screaming, the man said; and then suddenly the ship listed heavily to the starboard side.

"It was at this moment that he went to pieces. The trap which death had set for him on the submarine, and which he had escaped, seemed again to close on him. He could not go down into the deeps of the sea like a rat squealing in a hole. The thing, all at once, with a sudden, ghastly revulsion, became a horror beyond him. Terror suddenly flowed into the man and forced everything else out. He turned and ran.

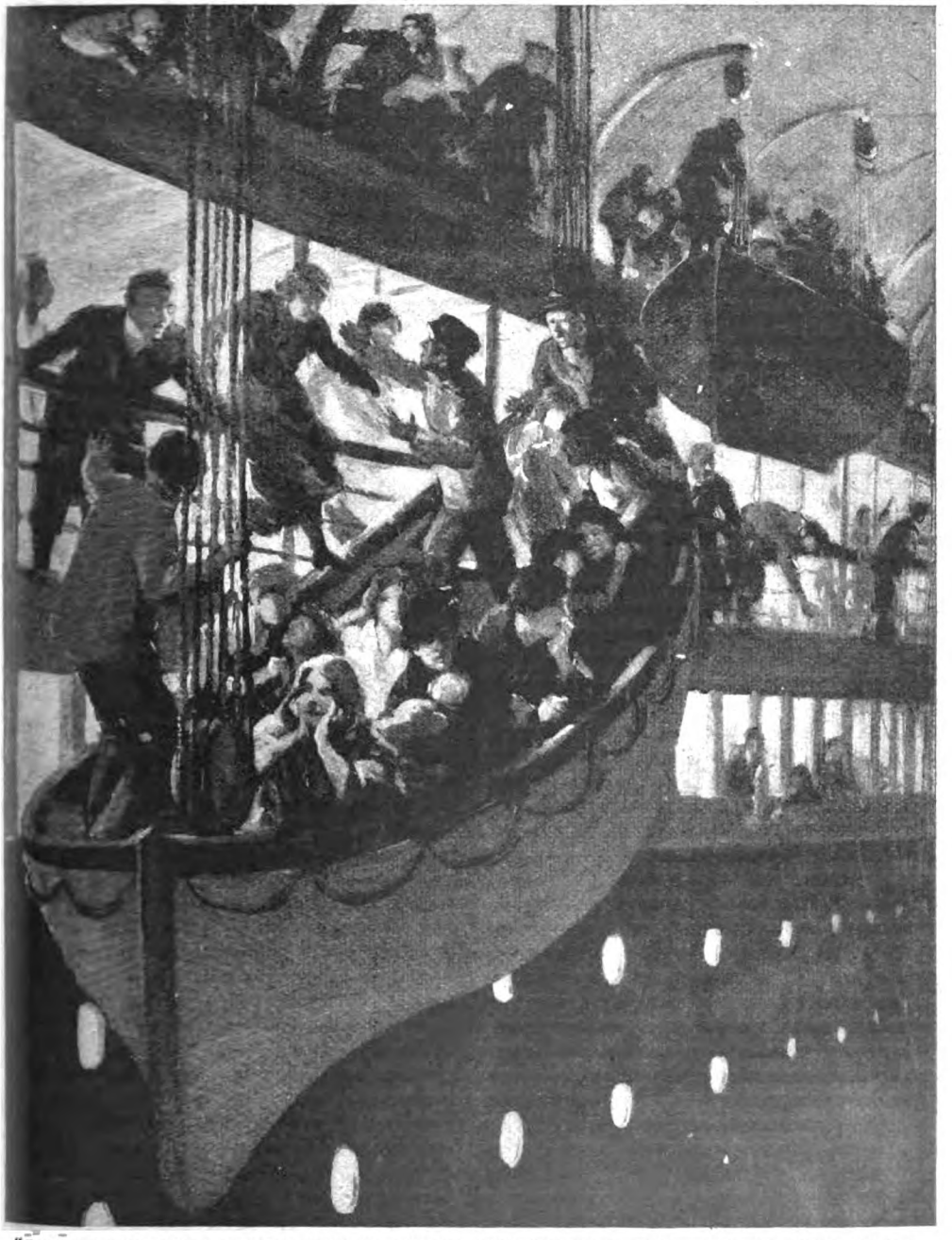
"And the things from which he fled—the sea, the screaming, and the darkness—became embodied horrors that pursued him. The man said that he remembered every detail; how one side of the stairway was steeper than the other; and how he feared that the terrors at his back would pull him down on these steepened turns. Once he shouted to frighten them off, and threw his cap back. Then he came out on the deck.

"He had now no care about anybody but himself. All at once everything else was nothing. His own life was his only concern. And it was a concern that forced out everything. Nothing else seemed to approach it, to be worth a fraction of a second, a thought, the effort of a motion.

"The deck on this side of the ship was lined with men. He darted back to the door and out on the other side. His foot struck something as he came out on the deck. He did not see what it was, but he stooped, picked it up, and held it in his hand while he took a moment to determine what he would do. The officers, on this side, were calmly putting women into the last boat. And he made up his mind to fight his way through the group of men into this boat at any cost. It was dark. He wore the stoker's jacket and overalls and nobody would know him."

The Oriental paused. Then he went on:—

"No one did know him, as it happened. One of the officers came toward him as he approached. The boat needed a sailor, and he inquired if the stoker could row. The man said that it was all he could do to say Yes, without shouting it so that the stars could hear him. He pushed through, swung down into the boat, and took hold of the oars. It was then that he realized he had something in his hand, and he stuffed it into the pocket of his jacket without stopping to see what it was. He said that the whole hell-pit of the world seemed to clear suddenly as though the sun flooded it. His heart made a great leap upward. Again he had saved his life!"



"THE OFFICERS WERE CALMLY PUTTING WOMEN INTO THE LAST BOAT. AND HE MADE UP HIS MIND TO FIGHT HIS WAY INTO THIS BOAT AT ANY COST."

Mahadol stopped. His left hand, big, podgy, and yellow, remained like a cup over the thing concealed on the table. With his other hand he took hold of the shell rim of his eyeglass and moved it on his shirt-front as though unconsciously he traced some mysterious, complicated arabesque. He looked at the Englishman, motionless, before the fire.

"You know what happened to the Iner, Lord Winton. Everybody knows. It was perhaps the awfullest ocean disaster of our time."

Lord Winton nodded, but he did not speak. He remembered all about it. But the innumerable details of the thing scattered everywhere gave him no conception to equal the essential details that stood out in this recital. He could understand the sudden terror and violence of a human creature who, having escaped one trap by a desperate hazard, a step or two farther on finds himself imperilled by another. He could realize, as a child can incredibly realize, the menace of the thick dark, the list of the ship as though a floor gave way, the screaming, the sense of suffocation, of being trapped and pressed down under the sea; and then the mad flight, the steepened stairway, the yell, the cap flung back, and the sudden, dominating, consuming, irresistible will to live. Mahadol continued :—

"The boat was picked up at daylight. Everything on the sea hurried into the North Atlantic track. In the confusion of the rescue the man, when he got into a cabin, took off the clothes under the stoker's jacket and overalls and threw them into the sea. He determined to remain the stoker that he had been taken for. Unshaven, and in these garments, no one suspected him, and he got away at the next port.

"He made his way across the American continent, and there he shipped East. He drifted into China and along the Malay Peninsula, over Asia, Mongolia, Tibet, finally Rangoon. But he could never get away from himself. And there was another thing that he could not get away from."

The Oriental suddenly removed the cup of his hand from the table, and under it Lord Winton saw a heap of jewels. Mahadol spread the heap delicately with his big fingers and it became a double strand of great Oriental pearls, beautifully matched. It was the most magnificent rope of jewels that Lord Winton had ever seen anywhere. There was nothing in England to match it. Somebody had sorted the stock of the world for this incomparable necklace. Lord Winton got on his feet.

"Good gad!" he said. "Did the man have that?"

The Oriental took up his eyeglass, leaned over the table, and moved the pearls about. The touch of his fingers was a caress. Then he sat back with a sigh.

"Yes," he said. "That's what the man had picked up. He said that his impulse, in the first months of his new life, was to keep it, as one would keep a buried treasure that he might go to in extremity. Then he got curious to know if the person who owned this necklace had escaped alive from the ship. The idea took hold on him. He could not get rid of it, and he made prodigious efforts to find out.

"Finally, in a wharf's den in Manila, in a heap of old American newspapers, he found an estimate of the treasure that had gone down with the ship. The list included the necklace that he now carried with him. It was described and its immense value set out, together with the name and address of the American woman to whom it belonged. The name was familiar to the outcast sailor, the wife of one of the incredibly rich men of America—one of the richest men in the world—with a fortune of over twenty millions of pounds sterling."

Lord Winton remained standing, and Mahadol went on. He did not appear to notice that the Englishman had got up. His fingers moved about the jewels as one touches something for which one has a profound and tender affection.

"The dying man said that his first sensation was that of relief, since the loss of the jewels had fallen upon a person who could well afford to bear it, and he could now dispose of them, as his needs should require, without feeling that the owner suffered from the loss. This was his intention, but he never could do it.

"He had now a strange sentimental obsession that proved always stronger than any necessity. The necklace seemed a sort of distinctive symbol flung to him by the evil fatality that had ejected him out of honour. And he came somehow to feel that the symbol, if he clung to it, would in the end, by some equal fatality, restore him to his former estate. But this night in Rangoon he saw that the notion was fantastic.

"He was at the door of death. His only concern now was to return the necklace to its owner. He gave me the name which he had never ceased to remember—Mrs. Henry Randolph Norman, at Newport, which I take to be a village or district in the Province of Rhode Island on the American coast."

The big Oriental got up, his thick, nimble hand still remaining about the jewels of the necklace.

"The thing has been on my conscience, Lord Winton," he said, simply. "When I learned that you were going out to America I thought perhaps you might be willing to take the necklace to the owner and so discharge an obligation that has been too long delayed. I shall be deeply grateful to you

for the courtesy. America is three thousand miles West, and I am old and hate the sea."

He did not stop to listen to Lord Winton's assent or his amazed comments. He stooped suddenly over the table with an abrupt, eager gesture, his monocle in his eye, his face close to the jewels, his fingers slipping over them like a miser's over a hoard of gold pieces. And all at once Lord Winton realized how the strange Oriental loved these jewels, what treasures they seemed to him; and what a profound sacrifice of the heart it was to part with them. And vaguely, for he had little imagination, he saw the struggle of this man to carry out a hidden trust of which nobody had any knowledge, a soul-struggle of the outcast rotting to death with the Monks' Plague in the spot of light under the poisonous steam of Burma.

This man lived with jewels and adored them. They were romance and mystery and passion to him; the shimmering bodies of the love-maidens in the pavilions of Paradise. To give them up was very nearly impossible. And something of the man's immense renunciation began to uncover itself to Lord Winton in a sort of wonder.

For a moment, hovering over the table in his act of final devotion, the Oriental was wholly oblivious of Lord Winton. His lips moved; his face was nearly touching the jewels; and he fingered them with a sense inconceivably delicate. Then suddenly he rose and went out of the room; swiftly, like one who is uncertain of his will to go. He got quickly into his coat and took up his hat and cane. Lord Winton followed, and opened the door. On the threshold the Oriental turned back for an instant. His face in the dim light looked distorted as though powerful, invisible hands were pressing it together.

"You'll not forget the name?" he said.

And immediately he went down the steps. Lord Winton saw him disappear into the night, his huge body bulking gigantic as it blended with the darkness.

Lord Winton went to Newport. At eleven o'clock he was in a drawing-room—a drawing-room that looks out over the sea and into which the morning sun enters. He had a knowledge of smart women. But the woman who appeared to receive him was something more than he had been accustomed to include under this term.

She was older than Lord Winton; perhaps ten years older. But there was permanent beauty in the bony structure of her face and in her firm, excellent figure. And the man was impressed that here was a person making common use of the best things in the world without any particular regard to the opinion of others; one who realized the use of human conventions and admired them without, however, feeling herself obliged to order her life according to their precepts.

The woman was superior to anything that Lord Winton had imagined, and he was a little confused to explain the errand upon which he had arrived. With English directness he plunged at once into his story, putting the jewels into the woman's hands.

She sat opposite Lord Winton listening intently. She did not move, but her face gradually changed. An expression, droll and charming, appeared as though it were the illumination of every feature. When Lord Winton finished she leaned back, the necklace twisted about her fingers, the droll expression animating her face, her eyes narrowed.

"How clever of Mahadol!" she said. "The bargain was to deliver this necklace to me in America for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars clear of duty. I didn't see how Mahadol was going to manage it."

She paused. "But he did manage it, with a bit of fiction and a British envoy!"

Lord Winton started.

"You mean," he stammered, "old Dang Mahadol made up the whole story—the plague, the trust, the dying Englishman, all, everything—to get a necklace, which he had sold you, brought into America without paying the customs?"

"Precisely that," she answered. "As an *attaché* of the Embassy your luggage would not be subject to search."

The man moved with the first impulse of a violent protest. But the woman's soft, low, impelling voice checked him.

"Why speak of it again?" she said. "Our Government wouldn't be pleased, and His Majesty's Government might not be encouraged to believe that Lord Winton was precisely adapted to a diplomatic career."

Some Famous Men I Have Met.

By E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT,

The Famous War Correspondent.

ABDUL HAMID.

"Abdul the Damned."

SOMEWHERE in a little house on the beautiful shores of the Bosphorus the ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid, or "Abdul the Damned," as he was designated by Mr. Gladstone, still carries on his miserable existence almost forgotten by the world which he once held in awe. But is he miserable? He has lost everything except his life and the companionship of one or two of his wives who voluntarily chose to share his exile, but, on the other hand, he may have acquired in the course of years a cynical philosophy which must cause him to derive no small satisfaction when contemplating the state of the Ottoman Empire, and of Europe generally, at the present day. If the old man is allowed to see and to hear, and if he has his senses still left, he must enjoy many a good laugh up his sleeve. He, the "Damned," must now feel that many others will follow him into the shades. In the course of his reign of nearly thirty years, crimes were committed and massacres perpetrated which filled civilized Europe with horror. In the course of the last three years crimes have been committed in Europe and within the Turkish Empire which have almost caused the countless evils of Abdul's reign to be forgotten.

I well remember Constantinople in the good old days when Abdul Hamid was at the height of his power and ruled the city and his entire Empire from Yildiz Kiosk. It was then a delightful dwelling-place for Europeans—gay, free, and beautiful. Although I saw him many times, I had only one interview with the Tyrant of Yildiz, and I shall not easily forget the impression the sinister old man made on me. I had just returned from the Greco-Turkish War, where I had been attached to Edhem Pasha's army until both my father and myself were captured by the Greeks. We were detained for two weeks and then taken to Athens, where we had an interview with old King George, a very agreeable old gentleman and a sincere friend of England. On leaving Athens we went straight to Constantinople, and on our arrival were informed that the Sultan himself desired to see us without delay, with a view to finding out what they thought of the proposed peace in Athens.

I well remember my emotions on entering the precincts of Yildiz Palace, a conglomeration of gaudy pavilions and gardens. I expected to find a brutal and ferocious tyrant stained with the blood of thousands of Armenians. The stories and rumours then current about the Sultan certainly justified my youthful emotions. He was said to have secret spies and assassins about the Palace who did away with any unwelcome visitors. In the popular imagination, any bodies found floating down the Bosphorus always owed their end to his machinations. Dark oubliettes were said to exist which led to Propontis, down which the victims, after being stabbed or poisoned, were thrown. His harem was also said to be of enormous dimensions and to contain every good-looking girl from every quarter of the Empire. Now, as a matter of fact, nine-tenths of the stories told of Abdul Hamid were probably untrue. Yet what a fortune there would be in a book of Abdul Hamid's memoirs!

"Surrounded by a Halo of Romance."

At this time, May, 1897, the Sultan was at the height of his power. He was surrounded by a halo of mystery and romance, worshipped almost like a god by his own people, and regarded by Europeans as a mixture between the most astute diplomat of his time and a bloodthirsty old tyrant. I was very young then, and exactly what he represented to me I cannot say, but I know that I entered the gates of Yildiz Kiosk in a state of awe.

ABDUL HAMID.
Photo. W. & D. Downey.

There was the inevitable wait in the outer *salon*, for no Oriental will ever see you at the hour named. I was then conducted to a large and gaudily-decorated saloon on the opposite side of the entrance-hall, where the Sultan received his visitors. The room was nearly forty feet square and very lofty. The floor was of marble mosaic covered with the richest Turkish carpets, and the walls were hung with beautiful tapestry. The Shadow of God on Earth was standing just inside the room as I entered, and greeted me in a most cordial manner,

shaking hands in the most approved European style. I shall never forget the picture he presented. There was nothing of the mighty conqueror or bloodthirsty Christian-hater of the type of Mohammed II. about Abdul Hamid. I found myself facing a very thin and small old man with drooping shoulders, and arrayed in a pair of check trousers and an ill-fitting frock-coat, the whole being surmounted by a red turban. To me, the Padishah looked the embodiment of cunning. His face was then extremely thin, and his skin absolutely without any colour. Two very bright, cold, black eyes placed very close together looked at you from the top of an extremely long and curving nose. The Sultan's forehead was high and intellectual. His voice was soft and pleasing, and his modulation of tone quick and expressive.

During the campaign I had been thrown from my horse and had cut my head open. Directly the Sultan had shaken hands he seized me by the shoulders and dragged me across to the large window looking out on the garden. Then, turning me to the light, he carefully examined the back of my head to see if it had healed up. Even this little incident was known to him. He then asked me a series of questions about the Turkish army and what I thought of the Turkish surgeons, whom he declared to be the best in the world—as a matter of fact they are the worst. He also volunteered the information that he himself had once met with a bad carriage accident and had remained unconscious for twenty minutes. All this conversation was carried on in Turkish through an interpreter, his Chamberlain, for, although the cunning old man knew French quite well, he would never speak any language but his own, as this gave him more time in which to make up his replies.

All the threads of his disjointed, unhappy Empire passed through this one man's hands. He himself told me that the generals at the front could not move a division without first consulting him. This is what made their operations so slow. He knew every single incident that passed at the front from his spies. After a few minutes' talk the Sultan invited us to be seated, and gave us excellent Turkish coffee and cigarettes from his own case. He smoked incessantly and dropped the ash all over his trousers. I then said farewell, leaving my father to discuss war questions and politics with him. I was allowed out in the Imperial gardens, and on wandering some distance I came across two ladies deeply veiled. On seeing me they turned and bolted like frightened rabbits. Feeling that perhaps I was going too far and might wander into the Imperial harem, from which it is said no interloper ever returned alive, I made my way back as quickly as I could.

That was the one and only occasion I ever met the Shadow of God on Earth, the last of the old-time Sultans, who ten years later was to be taken from his palace a drivelling old man, begging his life of those whom he had oppressed and banished from his realms.

GENERAL BARON NOGI.

The Hero of Port Arthur.

THERE is no man of whom I cherish more pleasing memories than General Nogi, the last of the old type of courtly Daimios, who made Japan famous in the past, and whose high ideals of chivalry and honour, even in the midst of war, were in such marked contrast to the methods of Prussia's military autocracy.

The first occasion on which I met this famous man was at the village of Shandtaiko, in front of Port Arthur, just after the Russian rearguard had been driven within the circle of permanent forts and the real siege had commenced. We, the war correspondents, had just arrived at the front and were presented to him and his Staff. He received us in the most polite and friendly manner, and throughout the six months that the siege lasted his attitude of kindness and almost paternal solicitude for our comfort and welfare never altered or relaxed. I well remember his brief little speech on the occasion of our first meeting. After shaking hands, he drew himself up and said: "Gentlemen, you have come to join my army. I am proud to have you with me. I wish you to be absolutely at home. You may go anywhere you like, you may do anything you like" (with a smile), "you can even take part in the assaults on the forts if you wish to. I only make one stipulation—until Port Arthur has been captured you must not send out a single word of news!"

This naturally came as a great shock, as we had been sent to the front for the express purpose of writing about the great events which were pending. However, there was no help for it, For six months we remained in front of the fortress and the General kept his word. We enjoyed complete liberty of action, but were not allowed to send a single word to our respective papers.

The General was tall for a Japanese and well built. His head was small, and at the commencement of the siege his hair was black, but before the end it became absolutely white. He had a very merry, cheerful face, with keen black eyes and a short grey beard. The shape of his head and this square-cut beard gave him rather the appearance of General U. S. Grant. He was very particular about his dress, and always turned out extremely smart in a short black coat, braided across the front, white leather breeches, and patent leather high French boots. He lived in the simplest style in a wretched Chinese village, surrounded by the inhabitants, their horses, dogs, cows, and pigs. In fact, the young bloods on the Staff complained some-

what bitterly about the General's simple tastes. Nogi was extremely active, and like all Japanese seemed to have no nerves and to know no fear. He never took the smallest precautions for his safety, but would ride about over the most exposed roads, apparently quite oblivious to Russian shells and keen-eyed marksmen.

He was always most punctilious in the observation of all ceremonies and anniversaries. It was his invariable custom to send each European two bottles of champagne on such occasions as the King's birthday or the Mikado's. Rarely a week passed without his finding an excuse to send his welcome gift. His letters on these occasions were couched in strange phraseology. I have one in my possession to this day, which reads: "To-morrow being the anniversary of the birth of your most exalted and beloved monarch, General Baron Nogi has the honour to send you something to keep your hands warm with."

GENERAL BARON NOGI.
Photo. Topical.

"Hara-Kiri."

The repeated failures to take Port Arthur weighed heavily on Nogi's mind. After the great failure of the attack on November 26th, 1904, he wrote to the Emperor and asked permission to commit "hara-kiri," as he felt he was unworthy to live longer. The Emperor had to issue a positive order to prevent him from doing so!

But through storm and sunshine, disaster and final success, General Nogi's kindness never changed towards those who found themselves under his command. When I went to say good-bye to him after the fortress had fallen, he begged me to come and visit him in Japan if I ever found myself there again. Some years passed before we met again, and for the last time. The occasion was very different, and also the surroundings. He had come over with Admiral Togo to attend the coronation of George V. I went to call on him at the Hyde Park Hotel, where he was staying. I was told by his A.D.C. that the General had only arrived that morning and could not possibly see anyone. I asked the A.D.C. to send up my card, and he consented to do so. A few minutes later he returned and said the General would certainly see me, as I had been with him throughout the siege.

I was ushered into his luxurious apartment overlooking Hyde Park—so very different from the humble farm at Toboshin, in far-off Liatung. He rose as I entered, and I saw that he had hardly changed, although perhaps his beard was a little whiter. But otherwise how different he looked! He was no longer clad in his war-worn uniform, but in an ill-fitting European frock-coat, which is a fatal costume for the Japanese to wear, as it accentuates the shortness of their stature. But, in spite of his clothes and his obviously uncongenial surroundings, I found that the General himself had not changed in the least. He was still the same delightful, courtly old Daimio. He also seemed to have forgotten the tragic side of Port Arthur, of the loss of so many of his old comrades and of his two sons. We talked about the siege for over an hour, going through many of its most interesting details. He also sketched briefly to me what his principal officers had been doing since the war came to an end. General Nogi himself took up the command of the Japanese Officers' College, which corresponds to our Sandhurst, following the example of General Lee at the conclusion of the Civil War. I asked him whether he was enjoying his trip abroad, and he made a brave show of pretending that he was, but I could see that all the feasts and *fêtes*, Courts and luxury, were quite alien to his simple soul, and that he longed to find himself once again among his own people, amid the flower gardens of Japan, where he could wear the national dress of his countrymen and not masquerade in a frock-coat and high hat.

This was the last occasion on which I ever saw General Nogi. Little did I foresee, as I said good-bye to him on that summer's afternoon, how tragic and how soon would be his end. I remember his telling me, after the death of his second son during the assault on 203-Metre Hill, that his house was extinct and that he was the last survivor of his line, and therefore he had no other interests in life when his days of active service came to an end.

The desire to take his own life apparently never left the General's mind, and he was only deterred from doing so after the war by the expressed wishes of his Imperial master. On the death of the Emperor this last obstacle was removed. The gallant victor of Port Arthur lost no further time. In the seclusion of his own home he took his life in the old-time manner—falling on a short double-edged sword. He has left an imperishable legacy to the Japanese nation in the memory of a character as brave as it was chivalrous, and a life devoted to the service of his country and his Emperor. Such characters as that of Nogi are rare. Nogi was the last of the Daimios. Those who were with him before Port Arthur will ever cherish the memory of this great and good man. Nor must the conduct of his wife be forgotten. Rather than survive the loss of her two sons and her husband, she also deliberately chose to follow them into the Great Unknown.

MARSHAL PUTNIK.

The Great Serbian Commander-in-Chief.

AMIDST the terrible clash of arms, the death of the old Serbian Commander-in-Chief, Marshal Putnik, in Switzerland, passed almost unnoticed. Yet he was one of the foremost soldiers and strategists of the age. He organized the Serbian army on modern lines and led it successfully in two great wars—against Turkey in 1912 and against Bulgaria in 1913. Although too infirm to assume the command in the present struggle, he was largely responsible for the early campaigns against Austria which opened so auspiciously for the gallant Serbian army. Putnik's great achievement, which was a masterpiece of strategy and tactics, was winning the great battle of the Bregalnitza in July, 1913—the battle which decided the war.

MARSHAL PUTNIK.
Photo. E.N.A.

Putnik was a thick-set man of middle height, with dark hair, a swarthy face, and a short beard. His habits were extremely simple, and his uniform so old and shabby that it was difficult to tell he was the Commander-in-Chief. Calmness was his great characteristic. Nothing ever seemed to perturb him. He worked everything out with mathematical certainty and hardly ever saw a soldier in the field. He had the supreme gift of being able instinctively to feel what an army was doing. He always knew where every battalion and battery was at any given hour, and even when the most alarming reports of reverses reached him he was never surprised or disturbed. I well remember him as he sat at his table in Uskub, always in the same chair, sometimes for eighteen hours at a stretch, with his shrewd old head bent over his maps. When I went to say good-bye at the conclusion of the campaign I told him I was returning *viâ* Vienna. He looked up and smiled, and said, "Tell Von Hoetzendorf what you think of the Serbian army. They never believe we are soldiers there."

ENVER PASHA.

The Ruler of Turkey.

THIS war has proved the greatest destroyer of reputations the world has ever known. The popular idols in all countries are put up only to be knocked down by untoward events like wretched skittles in a bowling alley. Only one or two survive the strain of this unparalleled conflict. Enver may well claim an honoured place amongst the survivors. He is the sole outstanding figure that Turkey has produced in the war, and to-day he is more powerful than ever, ruling his unhappy country, with Prussian assistance, with an iron hand.

Ever since I have known him I have always held the opinion that Enver is a very great man. I spent two days with him at Adrianople in October, 1913. I found Enver installed as governor of the town, and in fact, if not in name, commander-in-chief of all the Turkish armies. He sent for me on my arrival. Enver is short, well-set-up, has a fine-shaped head, very black hair, very black eyes, and a bristling black moustache turned up like the All Highest's. His jaw is extremely square and firm, and when he talks the fixed expression on his face never changes. Extreme calmness seems to be his leading characteristic. No one can doubt the dauntless courage of the man. Time and time again under the old *régime* he risked his life, and only a few weeks before he narrowly escaped death in the shooting match at the Foreign Office, when he himself shot Nazim Pasha and his A.D.C. dead, and narrowly escaped being shot across the table himself.

On my entering his official room, he at once told me clearly and distinctly his views on the position in which his country found itself. I have this record of what he said: "I can hardly believe the evidence of my own senses at finding myself back in Adrianople. Who could ever have thought, after the events of the autumn of 1912, that the Turkish armies would recover the whole of Thrace within a year?" He then told me clearly that he would prefer to see Turkey allied with England rather than with Germany. He complained bitterly of the attitude of our Foreign Office towards his country, and of how we had held out no helping hand in her hour of need, whereas the Kaiser had used all his influence to keep the Bulgarians out of Constantinople. "England," he went on, "has ever been our friend in the past, but now her every action seems but thinly to veil

hostility towards us." I asked Enver if the Turks would be content with their new frontier, the line of the Maritza, or whether he was in favour of a fresh campaign to recover more of the lost territory to the west of that river. He replied that he himself was in favour of a further advance, but the army was ill-prepared and ill-equipped for such an enterprise. He begged of me to let the truth be known in England of the horrible outrages committed by the Bulgarians during their occupation of, and retreat from, Thrace. "You will see for yourself how the Ottoman population has suffered. Whole districts have been turned into a wilderness and the women and children massacred or carried away." He then summoned his A.D.C., a young Soudanese called Hassan, and ordered him to take his car and motor me through the ruined districts. His complaints were only too true. Everywhere one saw signs of the barbarity of the Bulgarians. I visited dozens of ruined villages and spoke with the few survivors. The country was almost swept bare. This was in the autumn of 1913. Misfortunes make strange bedfellows. The Turks and their late oppressors are now fighting side by side on half-a-dozen stricken battle-fronts. The enmities of the past have been laid aside, at any rate for the moment, and the man who less than four years ago complained to me with a sob in his voice of the horrors inflicted on his countrymen has been responsible for the murder and rapine of nearly a million Armenians. Who will ever attempt to settle the problems of the Near East?

ENVER BEY.
Photo. Central News.

MARSHAL CONRAD VON HOETZENDORF.

Marshal Conrad von Hoetzendorf.

MARSHAL CONRAD VON HOETZENDORF, the present Commander-in-Chief of the Austrian armies on the Italian front, was considered by the German General Staff to be the foremost soldier in Europe, when prior to and at the outbreak of war he occupied the supreme position of Chief of the General Staff in Vienna.

On May 8, 1912, I sought an interview with this distinguished man and found my request granted without delay. Attached to the General Staff was a Foreign Bureau which dealt with all such applications, under an officer who spoke English perfectly and whose mother was, I believe, of English nationality. He pressed upon me the desirability of rubbing into the Field-Marshal the extremely high opinion I had formed of the fighting capacities of the Serbian soldier and of the skill of his chiefs.

Like Henry Irving.

Conrad von Hoetzendorf is a delightful, courtly old gentleman to meet, and is one of the most remarkable men in appearance I have ever seen. He is of short stature, extremely thin, and his face resembles a cross between Von Moltke's and Henry Irving's. He has deep-set, penetrating eyes, and his face is furrowed with countless lines, the whole being surmounted by a shock of long, wavy, dark-brown hair.

He made me describe to him in great detail the recent campaign of 1912, and asked me innumerable pointed questions of detail on the equipment, fighting capacity, organization, and habits of the Serbian, Turkish, and Bulgarian troops. He seemed greatly surprised at the high praise I bestowed on them, and made me repeat several incidents of the battle of Lule Burgas, so that he might cross-question me again. He then turned to the Serbian commanders and asked me my opinion of each. He had evidently formed a high opinion of Marshal Putnik. He then put this curious question to me: "We have always estimated that four corps would be sufficient to look after Serbia in the event of war. How many do you consider would be required?"

This question took me by surprise, but I replied: "I do not think you would have any chance of invading the country successfully without the employment of at least eight corps with strong reserves. The Serbian army, if necessary, will not hesitate to abandon Belgrade and will retire into the interior, where communications are difficult for a modern army. At guerilla warfare and attacking lines of communication they are supreme, as the men can

live on bread alone and require small transport."

The Marshal looked up, somewhat surprised, hesitated for a moment, and then replied: "Perhaps you are right; it does not do to underestimate one's enemies." Then he rose from his chair, walked towards the bay window, looked out into the street for a few seconds, and then, turning to me once again, he said in a voice of extreme bitterness: "Twice in the last two years I have prepared the Austrian armies for an attack on Serbia. Twice my plans have been frustrated by the politicians, but the issue is inevitable, and cannot be delayed much longer."

MARSHAL CONRAD VON HOETZENDORF.
Photo. E.N.A.

He then bade me farewell, saying I could be attached to the Austrian armies in the event of war. I thanked him and retired.

Before very long the Marshal's prophecy came true. But not in the manner he anticipated. True, Austrian armies, with German and Bulgarian assistance, finally broke down the heroic resistance of the Serbians, but in what a position of misery, starvation, bankruptcy, and disaster does Austria find herself to-day!

MULAI HAFID.

The Sultan of Morocco.

One hot June evening in the year 1907 I was sitting in my flat at St. James's Court, when there came a knock at the door, and on my opening it a man entered whom I had not seen for three years, the last time being in Yokohama, Japan, during the Russo-Japanese War. I then knew him as one of those strange adventurers whose antecedents are uncertain and whose futures are insecure. Without wasting any time, he broke into the object of his visit, after first pledging me to secrecy.

"You are the only man who can help me," he said. "I have just come from Morocco, and there are infinite possibilities in that country. It is in a state of complete chaos. Abdul Aziz, the Sultan, has, as you know, left Fez, and is at present in Tangier. His half-brother, Mulai Hafid, claims the throne and is marching on Fez. The Germans are intriguing to obtain possession of the country and so are the French. Everywhere the tribes are in revolt. No Europeans have dared to go to Fez for the last eighteen months."

Here, indeed, a vista of adventure opened up before my eyes. "Well," I replied, "what do you want?"

"I want you," D. replied, "to join with me in selling rifles to the Moors to fight one another with. They will pay any price for a rifle—as much as seven pounds for an old Martini. We can obtain thousands of Mausers for thirty shillings each in Antwerp, and the War Office will sell Martinis for ten shillings each, provided we give an undertaking they will not be sent to any country where they might be used against our own troops. I have an agreement with some of the Riffian chiefs to take all the rifles I can smuggle into the country at seven pounds each."

I confess I was somewhat sceptical about the possibility of running rifles into Morocco, but I foresaw infinite possibilities of doing other more legitimate business.

So I replied: "I will start for Morocco to-morrow and will investigate matters for myself. Will you come too?"

D. answered, "No; it might ruin everything if we were seen together, as I am already suspected."

That night I packed up and was off the next day, leaving D. in possession of my flat.

I reached Tangier five days later. I found the country in a turmoil on account of the massacre at Casablanca and the landing of the French troops. After spending two months with the French army, I returned to London convinced that Mulai Hafid was the one strong man who might restore order in the country, and determined to support him. I got together a small syndicate, which provided the necessary funds, returned to Morocco, secured an interpreter, and set out on my unknown adventure to Fez.

A Strange Adventure.

Morocco was the last of the ripe plums left in Northern Africa for Europe to quarrel over. The Algeciras Convention provided for its independence and government, but it was obvious the convention would not long be kept. The wealth of the country in cereals, cattle, minerals, and timber is immense,

and any country which could secure possession would be immeasurably the richer. I reached Fez after many adventures, being the first European to enter the city after eighteen months. I found Mulai Hafid had already arrived, having marched from his southern capital, Marakesh. I had no idea how he would receive me, as he was reported to be very hostile to all Europeans. But the morning after my arrival I was reassured by a present of a whole sheep, bread, and many varieties of fruit. Two armed soldiers were placed in front of my door, and I was summoned to the Palace at 1 a.m. Punctual to the hour, I was received into the presence of the last of the independent sultans.

MULAI HAFID.
Photo. E.N.A.

Mulai Hafid was then a thick-set, swarthy Moor of forty years of age, with extremely fine, lustrous eyes and a countenance which could be very open and agreeable when he wished. But when he was angry his temper was no joke, as his enemies learnt to their cost. After the customary greetings, I explained the object of my visit frankly and without in any way concealing my desire to obtain all the most valuable concessions. We then and there entered into a verbal agreement that I should have the concessions if I could obtain his, Mulai Hafid's, recognition by Europe, and the inevitable loan.

The next year I spent in almost daily intercourse with this swarthy savage.

Soon active negotiations commenced with the Chancelleries in Tangier to secure Mulai Hafid's official recognition as Sultan, for the French, realizing that Abdul Aziz's candidature was impossible, now decided to support Mulai Hafid under certain conditions. One of these was that he should provide a suitable pension out of State funds for his dethroned half-brother. Eleven thousand pounds per annum was the price demanded by Abdul Aziz for the renunciation of all his claims to the throne. Now Mulai Hafid considered this figure much too high, and sent to consult me. This led to an incident, and was the only occasion on which I have seen him angry with me. After discussing the matter for some minutes, he said: "My brother wants eleven thousand pounds per annum. I consider that four thousand would be ample. What do you say?"

A Story of Hafid and His Brother.

I replied: "Well, if I were in your place I would give him the eleven thousand."

Hafid almost jumped off his divan. "Why?" he asked.

"Well," I replied, "whatever sum you give is sure to become the regular precedent for all dethroned Sultans of Morocco, and thus, when your turn comes, your successor will have to give you the same."

Mulai Hafid became furious at the mere suggestion of such a catastrophe happening to his dynasty, but we managed to pacify him. In the end I think he compromised with Abdul Aziz for seven thousand. My judgment was not far wrong. Mulai Hafid lasted but a few years, and was then forced to resign, receiving the same pension as his half-brother.

After working for some months to obtain the concessions, my plans were greatly interfered with by the intrigues of the Mannersmann brothers, the two Huns, backed by an immensely powerful German syndicate, to obtain exactly the same concessions as I was after myself. However, Mulai Hafid hated the Germans and the French, and frequently declared to me he would be perfectly content to place his country under the protection of England and to grant us perpetual commercial rights.

It took me over a year to carry through my plans. At last the great day arrived when Hafid was to put his signature to a document which in a few years would have made my friends and myself rich beyond the dreams of avarice. We assembled in the Palace and the final terms of the contract were read over. I obtained the exclusive rights to all the mines of Morocco for forty years from the date of the opening of each mine, also the exclusive right to build railways and docks in the country. This, the greatest concession ever granted by a monarch to an individual, was obtained for a consideration of three hundred thousand pounds, to be spread over three years and secured on the Mosque property at Fez, in case Mulai Hafid should not carry out the terms of his agreement, and a small royalty on the mines.

The Germans were staggered when they heard what I had achieved. Two days later I left for London accompanied by Hafid's agents, making a record journey to the coast in my anxiety to reach home. My friends in London were astounded at my success, and steps were immediately taken to carry the deal through. The money was there for the asking. We could have obtained it from a dozen different sources. Then, alas, came the fly in the amber, and all my plans were ruined by a totally unforeseen circumstance. Our lawyer said: "You must obtain the consent of the Foreign Office to protect

your concessions, otherwise, if we pay money to Mulai Hafid and he refuses to carry out his part of the agreement, or if on his death his successor refuses, we should have no redress."

This seemed sound advice, so we approached the Foreign Office. That stately body of concentrated ineptitude received us coldly, and in fact informed us that our society was superfluous. We could obtain no satisfaction, so I determined to try higher up.

KING EDWARD VII.

THIS led to my first and only interview with that remarkable man, King Edward VII., of honoured memory, one of the greatest and wisest monarchs who ever graced the throne of any land. A private meeting was arranged by a mutual friend, and after lunch the King took me into a small room accompanied by Sir Charles Hardinge, then the permanent head of the Foreign Office. He sat down in a chair, took out a huge cigar, handed me another, and told me to be seated and to tell him the whole story. His manner was so natural and charming that I soon felt quite at home, and thus my task became easy. I told him the story of the whole enterprise in great detail. He frequently interrupted me with some shrewd observations, and asked many questions on the personality of Mulai Hafid. I produced a copy of the concession for his inspection, and he saw at once its immense scope and possibilities. He was especially interested when I told him how the Sultan desired to place his country under the suzerainty of England. When I had finished I left the room, and he had a consultation with Sir Charles Hardinge. Then I was recalled and the King said: "I am very sorry for you. You have worked hard and have achieved a great result. Unfortunately, it will be impossible for the Foreign Office to support this concession for these reasons: We have just arrived at an understanding with the French. France is to give us an absolutely free hand in Egypt, and in return we are to give her a free hand in Morocco and to support her in every way. You will therefore understand it would be impossible for the Foreign Office to support a concession which would deprive France of most valuable concessions in the country just after we have reached an understanding which has taken years to bring about. Times have changed. To support the balance of power in Europe, our actions must be governed by diplomatic understandings and *ententes*. We cannot think of ourselves alone. You have the satisfaction of knowing that you have done everything possible, and that had you lived, say a hundred years ago, when conditions were different and each was for himself, the whole of Morocco would now be under the British flag."

"So Natural and Charming."

The King rose, shook me by the hand, and I retired, disillusioned and disappointed, and inwardly cursing *ententes*. But there was no help for it. The King's manner of informing me had been so kind and gracious that my disappointment was soon mitigated.

I broke the sad news to the syndicate. That disgruntled body met for the last time, and decided unanimously to dissolve itself into its separate individual component parts and to cut its losses. I had to make a last dreary journey to Fez to inform Hafid and to return him his delegates. That ungrateful monarch, when he found I had not got the "ready," refused to see me and endeavoured to rob me of about two thousand pounds of the syndicate's money, which he learnt I had concealed in boxes in my house. But once again I reached the coast safely.

Thus ended the great Moroccan venture which occupied two years of my life, and out of which I never made a penny. Hafid, disappointed, turned towards the Mannersmann brothers. He granted them some modified concessions, which led to the Agadir incident, and which rendered the European war inevitable.

KING EDWARD VII.
Photo. D. Knights Whittome.

TAR AND TEMPERAMENT

By BARRY PAIN.

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

THERE are things which are at their best when they are very young, such as white gloves, broad beans, and tigers. But there are also things which are at their worst when very young, such as Stiltons, the human race, and tarred roads.

When properly matured the tarred road is fine, and the neighbourhood is rightly uplifted about it. In fact, the other kind of road—the untarred road—was invented by a German chemist before the war, in order to make motor-cars unpopular and thus prevent the British Government from securing a proper reserve of petrol.

But on a certain date in a certain town I encountered a tarred road that was in its infancy, and had trouble with it, and I wish to warn other wayfarers.

It must be admitted that in this case warnings had already been given. To every lamp-post a large notice was attached, passionately imploring pedestrians to keep to the pavement and on no account to walk on the newly-tarred road. But I cannot read notices.

This does not mean that I cannot read. On the contrary, I can read looking-glass writing, inverted writing, and museum manuscripts in a dead language. I can also read ordinary print, except the directions for making an income-tax return. But, being an artist, I can see nothing which is too obvious, just as I can never hear a man who shouts. A notice placed on the level of my eye is too obvious. I do not really see it, and its meaning never gets through to my cortex. This is sometimes inconvenient. For instance, at Charing Cross Underground a notice tries to say something to me about trains going East. It does not affect me. I intend to go to South Kensington, and trains seem plentiful, and all's well with the world. But I hardly ever go past Blackfriars without realizing that the train has misunderstood me and finding some other train that is more sympathetic.

Let me return to that tarred road. It was in a certain town, as I have already said, and it was in a district of the town known as St. John's Wood. I was going to lunch with R. H. S. L. Wilkins at his studio.

Wilkins has more initials than most men, and other peculiarities as well. His studio is a cross between a museum and a drawing-room, and contains nothing which is not rare and beautiful—with the exception of one painting which is by R. H. S. L. Wilkins. There is a kitchen annexe, where the most

"UNDOUBTEDLY IT IS UNUSUAL TO STAND MOTIONLESS WITH THF FEET IN A LARGE PUDDLE."

priceless servant in the world lives, and there is a place at the back where Wilkins sometimes thinks he paints. He rarely paints in the actual studio for fear of disturbing the furniture. I knew that at lunch I should sit in a Jacobean chair at a Cromwell table with a Queen Anne salt-cellar by my side. My knife would have a jade handle, I should eat from Nanking china, and drink my whisky-and-soda from a genuine old rummer engraved with Nelson's name. He actually uses the things that other collectors put into cabinets and showcases. Very rarely, since his servant is priceless, does anything get injured or broken. He has had the Nanking for ten years and has only lost one plate; he broke that himself the very first day he had it, when he was showing his man how it ought to be washed.

Now, as it was my nearest way, and as I cannot see notices, I walked across that tarred road, unconscious that it was far too young for heavy work of that sort. As soon as I reached the pavement I became aware that my feet had a tendency to linger at each step. This rapidly became more pronounced. Soon the suction-power of the soles of my boots grew so enormous that I feared they would pull up the pavement and get me into trouble. I turned the light of my intelligence on the problem.

It appeared that I had on the soles of my boots some adhesive substance derived from a newly-tarred road. But such roads ultimately became hard and ceased to be adhesive. What could I do to accelerate the hardening process in that section of the road which had attached itself to my boots? At that moment a water-cart came past and gave me my answer. The application of cold water would probably accelerate the hardening process. In a depression in the road a large, cold, convenient puddle had gathered. I wrenched my feet with some difficulty from the pavement and stood for several minutes in that puddle.

It was the intelligent thing to do. Some men would have gone back and changed their boots. I had not the time. Besides, I should only have forgotten and crossed the tarred road again, with similar results. Also I did not think Wilkins was worth it. But undoubtedly it is unusual to stand motionless with the feet in a large puddle. Women who passed regarded me with grave anxiety. Boys, so to speak, made songs upon me.

But when I returned to the pavement I felt rewarded. The foot-suction had practically ceased. The tar had almost hardened. I could and did walk briskly. And the improvement seemed to be progressive.

I need not have hurried. Wilkins was not at the studio, but Burrows—his inestimable man—apologized for him, and said he would be back in five minutes. Wilkins had been compelled to go out at the last moment. He had found that the shop had sent oranges that were too strong in tone for the colour-scheme of his luncheon table, and he had gone out to find some that were more anæmic.

I waited for him in the studio. It was unpleasantly warm. Obviously Wilkins had been working from a model and for once had been painting in the actual studio—probably in order to impress the model. His painting paraphernalia had been removed and the luncheon table had been set out.

There is one painting by R. H. S. L. Wilkins in the studio. I crossed the parquet floor and stood on a Persian silk rug staring at it. It is amazing what a perverse attraction really hideous things sometimes have. It is a picture of a poor woman who had no bones, but made up for it by being nine feet high. She is looking down at a white amorphous object at her feet. She is obviously saying, "I should never have bought that large white cushion if I had noticed that there was a beak sticking out of one corner of it." It is entitled "Leda and the Swan," but I cannot say why.

The problem of Wilkins is insoluble. He has taste and knowledge. He has had a proper training. He has enthusiasm. And yet he never paints a thing that is not absolutely putrid. I thought over the question in vain and turned away.

And that old and valuable Persian rug also turned away. The superheated studio had done its work, and the tar composition on the soles of my boots had resumed its deadly activity. It had larcenously and firmly annexed that rug.

I shuffled cautiously to a chair, the rug going with me, and sat down. I began with great tenderness to try to detach that rug from my boots, but it was hopeless work. And the rug was so aged and frail that the least violence would have torn it.

"I SHUFFLED CAUTIOUSLY TO A CHAIR, THE RUG GOING WITH ME."

I wiped the perspiration from my forehead, and the most horrible thoughts came to me.

I remembered that Wilkins had once said to me: "They wanted a hundred guineas for that rug, and it took me a week to get them down to seventy-five pounds."

I pictured myself seated at luncheon, the Persian rug still clinging passionately to my boots—Burrows handing dishes with a curious look in his eye—Wilkins listening to my feeble explanations with the rage of the collector barely restrained by the politeness of the host. And what a story he would tell about it afterwards at my expense!

I felt that what I wanted was time to think out something. I did not lose my head. I was determined to get away before Wilkins returned, but there was no panic about it. I had noticed on the model's throne the pair of soft red slippers that Wilkins had bought in the bazaar in Cairo. In one minute I had taken off my boots, put on the slippers, and left a scribbled line for Wilkins to say how sorry I was that after all I found myself unable to lunch with him. I also left my boots still adhering to the rug. Then I snatched up my hat and stole softly away.

It was really rather curious—the rest of my attire was European, but the Oriental slippers had the effect of making me feel Oriental all the way through. My very face became filled with the gravity and inscrutable mystery of the East.

I met two women of advanced years and knew them to be charwomen. They had that stamp. They could not have been anything else. As usually happens, one of them was giving advice and the other was not taking it. I heard the adviser say, with a glance at me: "No good arsting him, anyhow."

So of course the other asked me. She wished to be directed to the Zoo.

I shook my head and made the Oriental gesture of negation.

"Me no savvy," I said, simply. It was not acting. It was an artist's desire for harmony.

As they moved away the adviser said: "And you had but to look at his feet to know he was furrin."

And so home. I slept ill that night. I was trying to think out some simple and dignified explanation for Wilkins, and I was not getting it. In consequence I came down rather late for breakfast. I was informed that Burrows had called to leave a parcel, and to take back a pair of red slippers that I had borrowed. Oh, yes, and Mr. Wilkins hoped that I was better this morning.

The parcel contained my boots and the Persian rug, firmly welded together, and a brief note.

"I hate to send you this rug," wrote Wilkins, "but the alternative of keeping your boots is even more horrible. Let me have the address of the asylum and the hours at which the inmates are allowed to receive visitors."

One other letter was awaiting me. It was a bill from Aggavar for eight-and-six for a small repair he had done for me. As a rule bills arouse no special enthusiasm, but I welcomed this one since it reminded me of Aggavar. If there was a man who could save that Persian rug, it was Aggavar.

Aggavar is a Jew of doubtful nationality. He has a small curio shop in a street off Edgware Road. I sometimes employ him, but I never buy curios from him. He is by far the cleverest man I know. He restores pictures, mends china, and fakes anything better than any living man. He painted a considerable part of a picture which is now in the National Gallery. His laziness is extreme. I doubt if he averages two hours' work a day, but he probably does fairly well out of it. He has a large and luscious wife and three young sons.

I found Mr. Aggavar, paid my little bill, and Rebecca receipted it and put the money in the till, her husband being too tired for heavy work of this kind.

But his eyes lit up when I opened my parcel.

"That is a good rug," he said at once.

"Yes, Mr. Aggavar," I said, "it's about the best I've got, but you will notice that it has a pair of boots fixed to it."

"That I have already remarked."

"A fool came to see me. He had just crossed a newly-tarred road. He sat with his feet on this rug. And when he rose to go——"

"I see," said Aggavar. "It is a pity."

"Well, can you get those boots unstuck without injuring the rug?"

"I cannot. It is not possible. The material is very old, and the solvent that I shall use for the tar will injure it. But I shall arrange it, perhaps treating the colour a little, so that the injury cannot be detected."

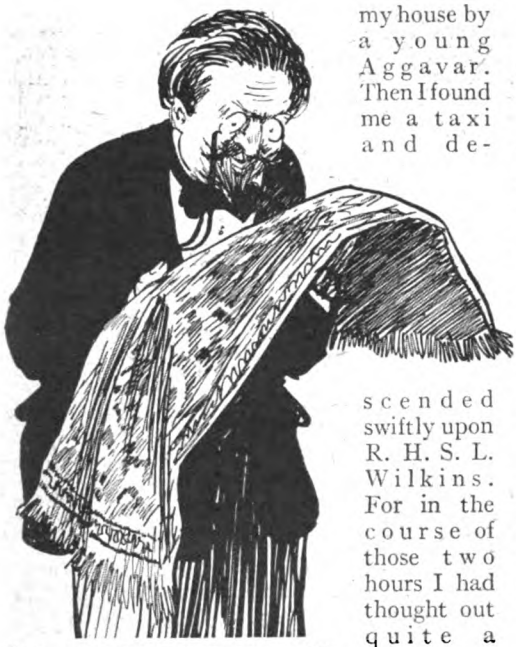
"And how long will this miracle take?"

"It is not a miracle. I wish I may never have anything to do more difficult. It will be finished in two hours."

In two hours I returned, and Aggavar with calm triumph exhibited to me the rug, and asked me if I could show him where the boots had stuck to it. I could not. It was an absolutely perfect piece of work.

I paid him with joy and took the rug away with me, leaving the boots to be delivered at

"IT'S ABOUT THE BEST RUG I'VE GOT, BUT YOU WILL NOTICE THAT IT HAS A PAIR OF BOOTS FIXED TO IT."



"HE EXAMINED THE RUG CAREFULLY. 'I GIVE THIS UP,' HE SAID. 'WOULD YOU KINDLY EXPLAIN?'"

my house by a young Aggavar. Then I found me a taxi and descended swiftly upon R. H. S. L. Wilkins. For in the course of those two hours I had thought out quite a pretty little story for him.

I found Wilkins in his studio.

"I've brought back your rug," I said, "though you don't deserve it. Here it is."

He seemed slightly dazed. He stammered words expressive of welcome and gratitude and flung himself on that rug. He examined it carefully, then spread it out in its appointed place, and sank back in a chair.

"I give this up," he said. "It's hopeless and cataleptic and couldn't have happened. Would you kindly explain?"

"I think," I said, coldly, "that it is for me to ask for an explanation."

"Why? You come to lunch with me, stay two minutes, and then go, having first taken off your boots and fastened them down with some bituminous substance to a valuable Persian rug, which is thereby irreparably ruined. Also you walk the public streets in a pair of red Oriental slippers. Obviously a case of sudden mental derangement. Next day you turn up with no signs of brain mischief beyond your normal, and return me the ruined rug in as good a state as before. And I mayn't even ask you for an explanation."

"I see," I said. "Knowing you as I do, I ought to have remembered your ignorance and your incapacity to grasp the simplest facts. As it was, I supposed that you knew what had happened, and knew further that you, and you alone, were to blame for it."

"Me? I?" gasped Wilkins.

"Undoubtedly. You yourself. On the day that I was to lunch with you the studio was much overheated. You will admit that."

"Well, I was working from Miss Dobbs, and you know how she grumbles. Always says that the pose is too difficult and the studio is too cold."

"Very likely. Secondly, you will admit that this is a parquet floor."

"It is. But what on earth has that got to do with it?"

"Everything. The wood blocks of a parquet floor are fastened down with pitch, and pitch melts when it is heated. I stood on that rug with my back to that comic cartoon of yours, and my weight pressed the rug tight down on the joints of the parquet, and the threads of the rug drew up the melted pitch by capillary attraction. The pitch cooled and stuck. I was so annoyed with your carelessness that I wouldn't stay for lunch, and went home in your slippers to punish you."

"Extraordinary! I should have hardly thought it possible. But at least it explains what Burrows told me."

"What was that?"

"That he had found traces of tar in other places on the floor."

"Quite so. Owing to the heat the pitch had sweated through the joins of the wood-blocks."

"I suppose that must have been it, though I have never heard of anything of the kind before. But even now I don't see how you got those boots separated from that rug without injuring the rug."

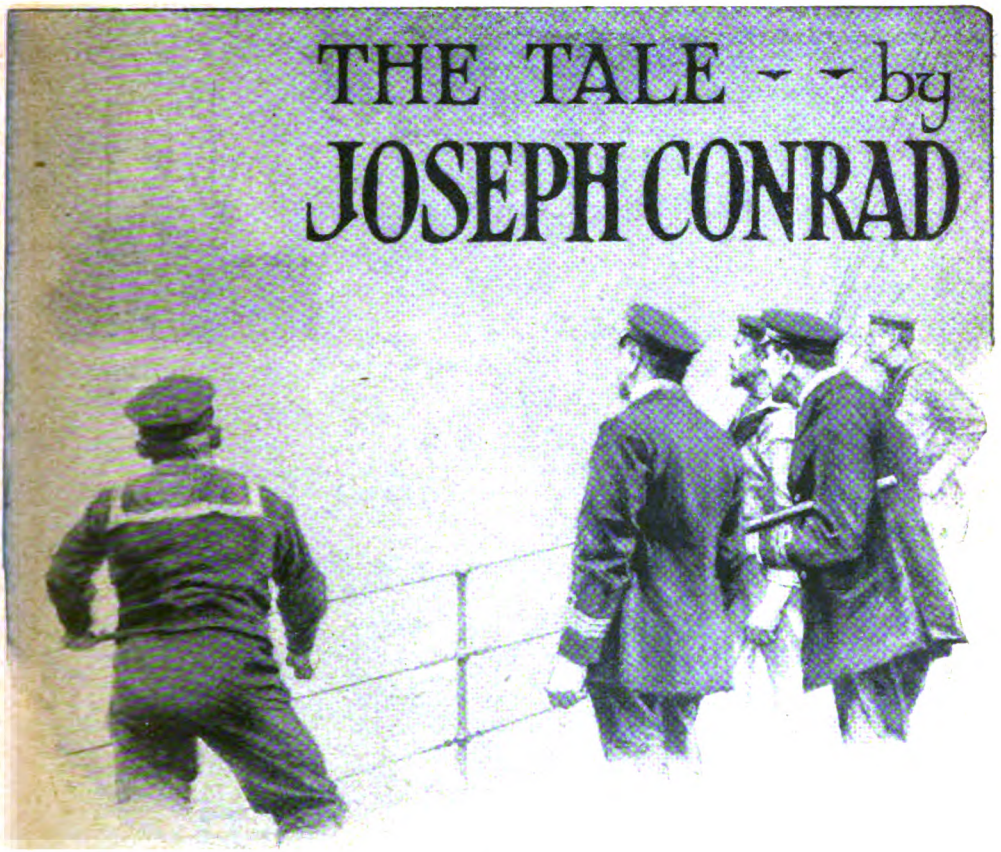
"It was the simplest thing in the world. The pitch yielded readily to a proper chemical solvent, and was soaked up by a few sheets of blotting-paper. No violence required. The job didn't take me twenty minutes. A child could have done it. I can't make out why you didn't do it yourself. You know what a treacherous pigment bitumen is. It might have occurred to you that the stuff ought to be easy to shift."

"Ah, but I don't know about these chemical things. It all seems simple enough when it's explained, and I'm really much obliged to you. I should have been sorry to have lost that rug. You're stopping to lunch, of course?"

I was. And after lunch it was quite safe to tell Wilkins the real facts. For now he could not jeer at me, lest I also jeered at him for the way in which he had been sold.

Always tell the truth. I am convinced that is the right thing. But sometimes it is better not to be in too much of a hurry about it.

THE TALE - - by JOSEPH CONRAD



Illustrated by C. M. Padday, R.O.I.

OUTSIDE the large single window the crepuscular light was dying out slowly in a great square gleam without colour, framed rigidly in the gathering shades of the room.

It was a long room. The irresistible tide of the night ran into the most distant part of it, where the whispering of a man's voice, passionately interrupted and passionately renewed, seemed to plead against the answering murmurs of infinite sadness.

At last no answering murmur came. His movement when he rose slowly from his knees by the side of the deep, shadowy couch holding the shadowy suggestion of a reclining woman revealed him tall under the low ceiling, and sombre all over except for the crude discord of the white collar under the shape of his head and the faint, minute spark of a brass button here and there on his uniform.

He stood over her a moment masculine and mysterious in his immobility before he sat down on a chair near by. He could see only the faint oval of her upturned face and, extended on her black dress, her pale hands, a moment before abandoned to his kisses and now as if too weary to move.

The silence was profound. The wave of passion had broken against a murmured sadness, thin air, passing mood—by its own accumulated momentum of desire; by its own towering strength sinking into the level repose that seems the end of all things under heaven, but only marks the rhythm of the swelling heart-waves running the circuit of the habitable globe.

He dared not make a sound, shrinking as a man would do from the prosaic necessities of existence. As usual, it was the woman who had the courage. Her voice was heard first—almost conventional while her being vibrated yet with conflicting emotions.

"Tell me something," she said.

The darkness hid his surprise and then his smile. Had he not just said to her everything worth telling in the world—and that not for the first time!

"What am I to tell you?" he asked, in a

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voice creditably steady. He was beginning to feel grateful to her for that something final in her tone which had eased the strain.

"Why not tell me a tale?"

"A tale!" He was really amazed.

"Yes. Why not?"

These words came with a slight petulance, the hint of a loved woman's capricious will, which is capricious only because it feels itself to be a law, embarrassing sometimes and always difficult to elude.

"Why not?" he repeated, with a slightly mocking accent, as though he had been asked to give her the moon. But now he was feeling a little angry with her for that feminine mobility that slips out of an emotion as easily as out of a splendid gown.

He heard her saying a little unsteadily, with a sort of fluttering intonation which made him think suddenly of a butterfly's flight:—

"You used to tell—your—your simple and—and professional—tales very well at one time. Or well enough to interest me. You had a—a sort of art—in the days—the days before the war."

"Really?" he said, with involuntary gloom. "But now, you see, the war is going on," he continued in such a dead, equable tone that she felt a slight chill fall over her shoulders. And yet she persisted. For there's nothing more unswerving in the world than a woman's caprice.

"It could be a tale not of this world," she explained.

"You want a tale of the other, the better world?" he asked, with a matter-of-fact surprise. "You must evoke for that task those who have already gone there."

"No. I don't mean that. I mean another—some other—world. In the universe—not in heaven."

"I am relieved. But you forget that I have only a five days' leave."

"Yes. And I've also taken a five days' leave from—from my duties."

"I like that word."

"What word?"

"Duty."

"It is horrible—sometimes."

"Oh, that's because you think it's narrow. But it isn't. It contains infinities, and—and so——"

"What is this jargon?"

He disregarded the interjected scorn. "An infinity of absolution, for instance," he continued. "But as to this 'another world'—who's going to look for it and for the tale that is in it?"

"You," she said, with a strange, almost rough, sweetness of assertion.

He made a shadowy movement of assent in his chair, the irony of which not even the gathered darkness could render mysterious.

"As you will. In that world, then, there was once upon a time a Commanding Officer and a Northman. Put in the capitals, please, because they had no other names. It was a world of seas and continents and islands——"

"Like the earth," she murmured, bitterly.

"Yes. What else could you expect from sending a man made of our common, tormented clay on a voyage of discovery? What else could he find? What else could you understand or care for, or feel the existence of even? There was comedy in it and slaughter."

"Always like the earth," she murmured.

"Always. And since I could find in the universe only what was deeply rooted in the fibres of my being there was love in it too. But we won't talk of that."

"No. We won't," she said, in a neutral tone which concealed perfectly her relief—or her disappointment. Then after a pause she added: "It's going to be a comic story."

"Well——" He paused too. "Yes. In a way. In a very grim way. It will be human, and, as you know, comedy is but a matter of the visual angle. And it won't be a noisy story. All the long guns in it will be dumb—as dumb as so many telescopes."

"Ah, there are guns in it, then! And may I ask—where?"

"Afloat. You remember that the world of which we speak had its seas. A war was going on in it. It was a funny world and terribly in earnest. Its war was being carried on over the land, over the water, under the water, up in the air, and even under the ground. And many young men in it, mostly in wardrooms and messrooms, used to say to each other—pardon the unparliamentary word—they used to say, 'It's a damned bad war, but it's better than no war at all.' Sounds flippant, doesn't it?"

He heard a nervous, impatient sigh in the depths of the couch while he went on without a pause.

"And yet there is more in it than meets the eye. I mean more wisdom. Flippancy, like comedy, is but a matter of visual first-impression. That world was not very wise. But there was in it a certain amount of common working sagacity. That, however, was mostly worked by the neutrals in diverse ways, public and private, which had to be watched; watched by acute minds and also by actual sharp eyes. They had to be very sharp indeed, too, I assure you."

"I can imagine," she murmured, appreciatively.

"What is there that you can't imagine?" he pronounced, soberly. "You have the world in you. But let us go back to our Commanding Officer, who, of course, commanded a ship of a sort. My tales if often professional (as you remarked just now) have never been technical. So I'll just tell you that the ship was of a very ornamental sort once, with lots of grace and elegance and luxury about her. Yes, once! She was like a pretty woman who had suddenly put on a suit of sackcloth and stuck revolvers in her belt. But she floated lightly, she moved nimbly, she was quite good enough."

"That was the opinion of the Commanding Officer?" said the voice from the couch.

"It was. He used to be sent out with her along certain coasts to see—what he could see. Just that. And sometimes he had some preliminary information to help him, and sometimes

"IT MAY HAVE BEEN NOTHING MORE REMARKABLE THAN, SAY, A BARREL OF A CERTAIN SHAPE AND COLOUR. BUT IT WAS SIGNIFICANT."

he had not. And it was all one, really. It was about as useful as information trying to convey the locality and intentions of a cloud, of a phantom taking shape here or there and impossible to seize, would have been.

"It was in the early days of the war. What at first used to amaze the Commanding Officer was the unchanged face of the waters, with its familiar expression, neither more friendly nor more hostile. On fine days the sun strikes sparks upon the blue; here and there a peaceful smudge of smoke hangs in the distance, and it is impossible to believe that the familiar clear horizon traces the limit of one great circular ambush.

"Yes, it is impossible to believe, till some day you see a ship not your own ship (that isn't so impressive), but some ship in company, blow up all of a sudden and plop under almost before you know what had happened to her. Then you begin to believe. Henceforth you go out for the work to see—what you can see, and you keep on at it with the conviction that some day you will die from something you have not seen. One envies the soldiers at the end of the day, wiping the sweat and blood from their faces, counting the dead fallen to their hands, looking at the devastated fields, the torn earth that seems to suffer and bleed with them. One does, really. The final brutality of it—the taste of primitive passion—the ferocious frankness of the blow struck with one's hand—the direct call and the straight response. Well, the sea gave you nothing of that, and seemed to pretend that there was nothing the matter with the world."

She interrupted, stirring a little.

"Oh, yes. Sincerity—frankness—passion—three words of your gospel. Don't I know them!"

"Think! Isn't it ours—believed in common?" he asked, anxiously, yet without expecting an answer, and went on at once. "Such were the feelings of the Commanding Officer. When the night came trailing over the sea, hiding what looked like the hypocrisy of an old friend, it was a relief. The night blinds you frankly—and there are circumstances when the sunlight may grow as odious to one as falsehood itself. Night is all right.

"At night the Commanding Officer could let his thoughts get away—I won't tell you where. Somewhere where there was no choice but between truth and death. But thick weather, though it blinded one, brought no such relief. Mist is deceitful, the dead luminosity of the fog is irritating. It seems that you *ought* to see.

"One gloomy, nasty day the ship was steaming along her beat in sight of a rocky, dangerous coast that stood out intensely black like an

Indian-ink drawing on grey paper. Presently the Second in command spoke to his chief. He thought he saw something on the water, to seaward. Small wreckage, perhaps.

"'But there shouldn't be any wreckage here, sir,' he remarked.

"'No,' said the Commanding Officer. 'The last reported submarined ships were sunk a long way to the westward. But one never knows. There may have been others since then not reported nor seen. Gone with all hands.'

"That was how it began. The ship's course was altered to pass the object close: for it was necessary to have a good look at what one could see. Close, but without touching: for it was not advisable to come in contact with objects of any form whatever floating casually about. Close, but without stopping or even diminishing speed: for in those times it was not prudent to linger on any particular spot, even for a moment. I may tell you at once that the object was not dangerous in itself. No use in describing it. It may have been nothing more remarkable than, say, a barrel of a certain shape and colour. But it was significant.

"The smooth bow-wave hove it up as if for a closer inspection, and then the ship, brought again to her course, turned her back on it with indifference, while twenty pairs of eyes on her deck stared in all directions trying to see—what they could see.

"The Commanding Officer and his Second in command discussed the object with understanding. It appeared to them to be not so much a proof of the sagacity as of the activity of certain neutrals. This activity had in many cases taken the form of replenishing the stores of certain submarines at sea. This was generally believed, if not absolutely known. But the very nature of things in those early days pointed that way. The object, looked at closely and turned away from with apparent indifference, put it beyond doubt that something of the sort had been done somewhere in the neighbourhood.

"The object in itself was more than suspect. But the fact of its being left in evidence roused other suspicions. Was it the result of some deep and devilish purpose? As to that all speculation soon appeared to be a vain thing. Finally the two officers came to the conclusion that it was left there most likely by accident, complicated possibly by some unforeseen necessity: such, perhaps, as the sudden need to get away quickly from the spot, or something of that kind.

"Their discussion had been carried on in curt, weighty phrases, separated by long, thoughtful silences. And all the time their eyes roamed about the horizon in an everlasting, almost mechanical effort of vigilance. The younger man summed up grimly:—

"'Well, it's evidence. That's what this is. Evidence of what we were pretty certain of before. And plain, too.'

"'And much good it will do to us,' retorted the Commanding Officer. 'The parties are miles away; the submarine, devil only knows where, ready to kill; and the noble neutral slipping away to the eastward, ready to lie!'

"The Second in command laughed a little at the tone. But he guessed that the neutral wouldn't even have to lie very much. Fellows like that, unless caught in the very act, felt themselves pretty safe. They could afford to chuckle. That fellow was probably chuckling to himself. It's very possible he had been before at the game and didn't care a rap for the bit of evidence left behind. It was a game in which practice made one bold and successful too.

"And again he laughed faintly. But his Commanding Officer was in revolt against the murderous stealthiness of methods and the atrocious callousness of complicities that seemed to taint the very source of men's deep emotions and noblest activities; to corrupt their imagination which builds up the final conceptions of life and death. He suffered——"

The voice from the sofa interrupted the narrator.

"How well I can understand that in him!"

He bent forward slightly.

"Yes. I too. Everything should be open in love and war. Open as the day, since both are the call of an ideal which it is so easy, so terribly easy, to degrade in the name of Victory."

He paused; then went on:—

"I don't know that the Commanding Officer delved so deep as that into his feelings. But he did suffer from them—a sort of disenchanted sadness. It is possible, even, that he suspected himself of folly. Man is various. But he had no time for much introspection, because from the south-west a wall of fog had advanced upon his ship. Great convolutions of vapours flew over, swirling about masts and funnel, which looked as if they were beginning to melt. Then they vanished.

"The ship was stopped, all sounds ceased, and the very fog became motionless, growing denser and as if solid in its amazing dumb immobility. The men at their stations lost sight of each other. Footsteps sounded stealthy; rare voices, impersonal and remote, died out without resonance. A blind white stillness took possession of the world.

"It looked, too, as if it would last for days. I don't mean to say that the fog did not vary a little in its density. Now and then it would thin out mysteriously, revealing to the men a more or less ghostly presentment of their ship. Several times the shadow of the coast itself swam darkly before their eyes through the fluctuating opaque brightness of the great white cloud clinging to the water.

"Taking advantage of these moments, the ship had been moved cautiously nearer the shore. It was useless to remain out in such thick weather. Her officers knew every nook and cranny of the coast along their beat. They thought that she would be much better in a certain cove. It wasn't a large place, just ample room for a ship to swing at her anchor. She would have an easier time of it till the fog lifted up.

"Slowly, with infinite caution and patience,

they crept closer and closer, seeing no more of the cliffs than an evanescent dark loom with a narrow border of angry foam at its foot. At the moment of anchoring the fog was so thick that for all they could see they might have been a thousand miles out in the open sea. Yet the shelter of the land could be felt. There was a peculiar quality in the stillness of the air. Very faint, very elusive the wash of the ripple against the encircling land reached their ears, with mysterious sudden pauses.

"The anchor dropped, the leads were laid in. The Commanding Officer went below into his cabin. But he had not been there very long when a voice outside his door requested his presence on deck. He thought to himself: 'What is it now?' He felt some impatience at being called out again to face the wearisome fog.

"He found that it had thinned again a little and had taken on a gloomy hue from the dark cliffs which had no form, no outline, but asserted themselves as a curtain of shadows all round the ship, except in one bright spot, which was the entrance from the open sea. Several officers were looking that way from the bridge. The Second in command met him with the breathlessly whispered information that there was another ship in the cove.

"She had been made out by several pairs of eyes only a couple of minutes before. She was lying at anchor very near the entrance—a mere vague blot on the fog's brightness. And the Commanding Officer by staring in the direction pointed out to him by eager hands ended by distinguishing it at last himself. Indubitably a vessel of some sort.

"'It's a wonder we didn't run slap into her when coming in,' observed the Second in command.

"'Send a boat on board before she vanishes,' said the Commanding Officer. He surmised that this was a coaster. It could hardly be anything else. But another thought came into his head suddenly. 'It is a wonder,' he said to his Second in command, who had rejoined him after sending the boat away.

"By that time both of them had been struck by the fact that the ship so suddenly discovered had not manifested her presence by ringing her bell.

"'We came in very quietly, that's true,' concluded the younger officer. 'But they must have heard our leadsmen at least. We couldn't have passed her more than fifty yards off. The closest shave! They may even have made us out, since they were aware of something coming in. And the strange thing is that we never heard a sound from her. The fellows on board must have been holding their breath.'

"'Aye,' said the Commanding Officer, thoughtfully.

"In due course the boarding-boat returned, appearing suddenly alongside, as though she had burrowed her way under the fog. The officer in charge came up to make his report, but the Commanding Officer didn't give him time to begin. He cried from a distance:—

"'Coaster, isn't she?'

"'No, sir. A stranger—a neutral,' was the answer.

"'No. Really! Well, tell us all about it. What is she doing here?'

"The young man stated then that he had been told a long and complicated story of engine troubles. But it was plausible enough from a strictly professional point of view and it had the usual features: disablement, dangerous drifting along the shore, weather more or less thick for days, fear of a gale, ultimately a resolve to go in and anchor anywhere on the coast, and so on. Fairly plausible.

"'Engines still disabled?' inquired the Commanding Officer.

"'No, sir. She has steam on them.'

"The Commanding Officer took his Second aside. 'By Jove!' he said, 'you were right! They were holding their breaths as we passed them. They were.'

"But the Second in command had his doubts now.

"'A fog like this does muffle small sounds, sir,' he remarked. 'And what could his object be, after all?'

"'To sneak out unnoticed,' answered the Commanding Officer.

"'Then why didn't he? He might have done it, you know. Not exactly unnoticed, perhaps. I don't suppose he could have slipped his cable without making some noise. Still, in a minute or so he would have been lost to view—clean gone before we had made him out fairly. Yet he didn't.'

"They looked at each other. The Commanding Officer shook his head. Such suspicions as the one which had entered his head are not defended easily. He did not even state it openly. The boarding officer finished his report. The cargo of the ship was of a harmless and useful character. She was bound to an English port. Papers and everything in perfect order. Nothing suspicious to be detected anywhere.

"Then passing to the men, he reported the crew on deck as the usual lot. Engineers of the well-known type, and very full of their achievement in repairing the engines. The mate surly. The master rather a fine specimen of a Northman, civil enough, but appeared to have been drinking. Seemed to be recovering from a regular bout of it.

"'I told him I couldn't give him permission to proceed. He said he wouldn't dare to move his ship her own length out in such weather as this, permission or no permission. I left a man on board, though.'

"'Quite right.'

"The Commanding Officer, after communing with his suspicions for a time, called his Second aside.

"'What if she were the very ship which had been feeding some infernal submarine or other?' he said, in an undertone.

"The other stared. Then, with conviction:—

"'She would get off scot-free. You couldn't prove it, sir.'

"'I want to look into it myself.'

"'From the report we've heard I am afraid you couldn't even make a case for reasonable suspicion, sir.'

"'I'll go on board all the same.'

"He had made up his mind. Curiosity is the great motive power of hatred and love. What did he expect to find? He could not have told anybody—not even himself.

"What he really expected to find there was the atmosphere, the atmosphere of gratuitous treachery, which in his view nothing could excuse; for he thought that even a passion of unrighteousness for its own sake could not excuse that. But could he detect it? Sniff it? Taste it? Receive some mysterious communication which would turn his invincible suspicions into a certitude strong enough to provoke action with all its risks?

"The master met him on the after-deck, looming up in the fog amongst the blurred shapes of the usual ship's fittings. He was a robust Northman, bearded, and in the force of his age. A round leather cap fitted his head closely. His hands were rammed deep into the pockets of his short leather jacket. He kept them there while he explained that at sea he lived in the chart-room, and led the way there, striding carelessly. Just before reaching the door under the bridge he staggered a little, recovered himself, flung it open, and stood aside, leaning his shoulder as if involuntarily against the side of the house, and staring vaguely into the fog-filled space. But he followed the Commanding Officer at once, flung the door to, snapped on the electric light, and hastened to thrust his hands back into his pockets, as though afraid of being seized by them either in friendship or in hostility.

"The place was stuffy and hot. The usual chart-rack overhead was full, and the chart on the table was kept unrolled by an empty cup standing on a saucer half-full of some spilt dark liquid. A slightly-nibbled biscuit reposed on the chronometer-case. There were two settees, and one of them had been made up into a bed with a pillow and some blankets, which were now very much tumbled. The Northman let himself fall on it, his hands still in his pockets.

"'Well, here I am,' he said, with a curious air of being surprised at the sound of his own voice.

"The Commanding Officer from the other settee observed the handsome, flushed face. Drops of fog hung on the yellow beard and moustaches of the Northman. The much darker eyebrows ran together in a puzzled frown, and suddenly he jumped up.

"'What I mean is that I don't know where I am. I really don't,' he burst out, with extreme earnestness. 'Hang it all! I got turned around somehow. The fog has been after me for a week. More than a week. And then my engines broke down. I will tell you how it was.'

"He burst out into loquacity. It was not hurried, but it was insistent. It was not continuous for all that. It was broken by the most queer, thoughtful pauses. Each of these pauses lasted no more than a couple of seconds, and each had the profundity of an endless meditation. When he began again nothing betrayed in him the slightest consciousness of these intervals. There was the same fixed glance, the same unchanged earnestness of tone. He didn't know. Indeed, more than one of these pauses occurred in the middle of a sentence.

"The Commanding Officer listened to the tale. It struck him as more plausible than simple truth is in the habit of being. But that, perhaps, was prejudice. All the time the Northman was speaking the Commanding Officer had been aware of an inward voice, a grave murmur in the depth of his very own self, telling another tale, as if on purpose to keep alive in him his indignation and his anger with that baseness of greed or of mere outlook which lies often at the root of simple ideas.

"It was the story that had been already told to the boarding officer an hour or so before. The Commanding Officer nodded slightly at the Northman from time to time. The latter came to an end and turned his eyes away. He added, as an afterthought:—

"'Wasn't it enough to drive a man out of his mind with worry? And it's my first voyage to this part, too. And the ship's my own. Your officer has seen the papers. She isn't much, as you can see for yourself. Just an old cargo-boat. Bare living for my family.'

"He raised a big arm to point at a row of photographs plastering the bulkhead. The movement was ponderous, as if the arm had been made of lead. The Commanding Officer said, carelessly:—

"'You will be making a fortune yet for your family with this old ship.'

"'Yes, if I don't lose her,' said the Northman, gloomily.

"'I mean—out of this war,' added the Commanding Officer.

"The Northman stared at him in a curiously unseeing and at the same time interested manner, as only eyes of a particular blue shade can stare.

"'And you wouldn't be angry at it,' he said, 'would you? You are too much of a gentleman. We didn't bring this on you. And suppose we sat down and cried. What good would that be? Let those cry who made the trouble,' he concluded, with energy. 'Time's money, you say. Well—*this* time *is* money. Oh! isn't it!'

"The Commanding Officer tried to keep under the feeling of immense disgust. He said to himself that it was unreasonable. Men were like that—moral cannibals feeding on each other's misfortunes. He said aloud:—

"'You have made it perfectly plain how it is that you are here. Your log-book confirms you very minutely. Of course, a log-book may be cooked. Nothing easier.'

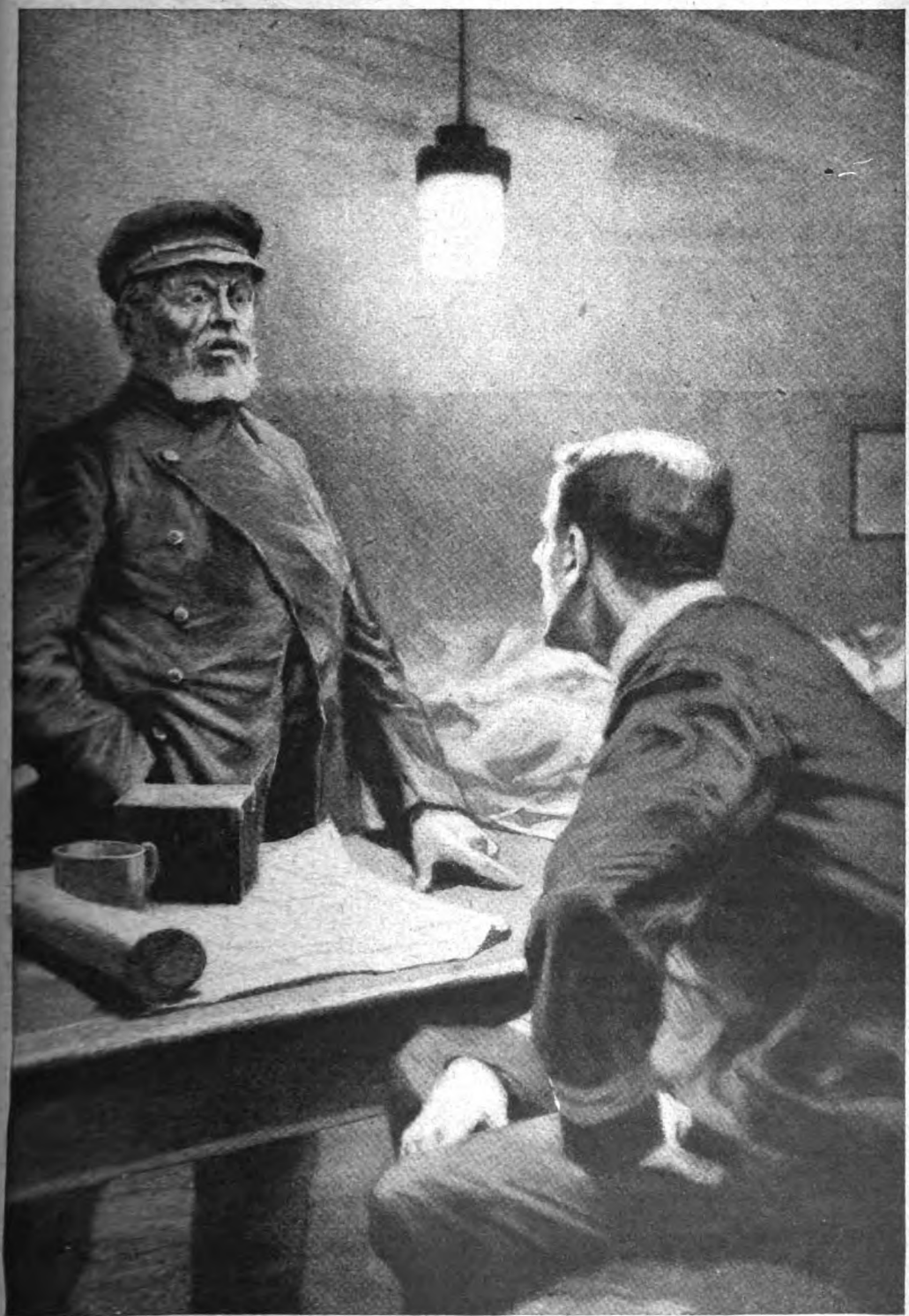
"The Northman never moved a muscle. He was gazing at the floor; he seemed not to have heard. He raised his head after a while.

"'But you can't suspect me of anything,' he muttered, negligently.

"The Commanding Officer thought: 'Why should he say this?'

"Immediately afterwards the man before him added: 'My cargo is for an English port.'

"His voice had turned husky for the moment. The Commanding Officer reflected: 'That's true



"THE NORTHMAN STARED AT HIM IN A CURIOUSLY UNSEEING AND AT THE SAME TIME INTERESTED MANNER, AS ONLY EYES OF A PARTICULAR BLUE SHADE CAN STARE."

There can be nothing. I can't suspect him. Yet why was he lying with steam up in this fog—and then, hearing us come in, why didn't he give some sign of life? Why? Could it be anything else but a guilty conscience? He could tell by the leadsmen that this was a man-of-war.'

"Yes—why? The Commanding Officer went on thinking: 'Suppose I ask him and then watch his face. He will betray himself in some way. It's perfectly plain that the fellow *has* been drinking. Yes, he has been drinking; but he will have a lie ready all the same.' The Commanding Officer was one of those men who are made morally and almost physically uncomfortable by the mere thought of having to beat down a lie. He shrank from the act in scorn and disgust, which was invincible because more temperamental than moral.

"So he went out on deck instead and had the crew mustered formally for his inspection. He found them very much what the report of the boarding officer had led him to expect. And from their answers to his questions he could discover no flaw in the log-book story.

"He dismissed them. His impression of them was—a picked lot; have been promised a fistful of money each if this came off; all slightly anxious, but not frightened. Not a single one of them likely to give the show away. They don't feel in danger of their life. They know England and English ways too well!

"He felt alarmed at catching himself thinking as if his vaguest suspicions were turning into a certitude. For, indeed, there was no shadow of reason for his inferences. There was nothing to give away.

"He returned to the chart-room. The Northman had lingered behind there; and something subtly different in his bearing, more bold in his blue, glassy stare, induced the Commanding Officer to conclude that the fellow had snatched at the opportunity to take another swig at the bottle he must have had concealed somewhere.

"He noticed, too, that the Northman on meeting his eyes put on an elaborately-surprised expression. At least, it seemed elaborated. Nothing could be trusted. And the Englishman felt himself with astonishing conviction faced by an enormous lie, solid like a wall, with no way round to get at the truth, whose ugly, murderous face he seemed to see peeping over at him with a cynical grin.

"'I dare say,' he began, suddenly, 'you are wondering at my proceedings, though I am not detaining you, am I? You wouldn't dare to move in this fog?'

"'I don't know where I am,' the Northman ejaculated, earnestly. 'I really don't.'

"He looked around as if the very chart-room fittings were strange to him. The Commanding Officer asked him whether he had not seen any unusual objects floating about while he was at sea.

"'Objects! What objects? We were groping blind in the fog for days.'

"'We had a few clear intervals,' said the Commanding Officer. 'And I'll tell you what we have seen and the conclusion I've come to about it.'

"He told him in a few words. He heard the sound of a sharp breath indrawn through closed teeth. The Northman with his hand on the table stood absolutely motionless and dumb. He stood as if thunderstruck. Then he produced a fatuous smile.

"Or at least so it appeared to the Commanding Officer. Was this significant, or of no meaning whatever? He didn't know, he couldn't tell. All the truth had departed out of the world as if drawn in, absorbed in this monstrous villainy this man was—or was not—guilty of.

"'Shooting's too good for people that conceive neutrality in this pretty way,' remarked the Commanding Officer, after a silence.

"'Yes, yes, yes,' the Northman assented, hurriedly—then added an unexpected and dreamy-voiced 'Perhaps.'

"Was he pretending to be drunk, or only trying to appear sober? His glance was straight, but it was somewhat glazed. His lips outlined themselves firmly under his yellow moustache. But they twitched. Did they twitch? And why was he drooping like this in his attitude?

"'There's no perhaps about it,' pronounced the Commanding Officer, sternly.

"The Northman had straightened himself. And unexpectedly he looked stern too.

"'No. But what about the tempters? Better kill that lot off. There's about four, five, six million of them,' he said, grimly; but in a moment changed into a whining key. 'But I had better hold my tongue. You have some suspicions.'

"'No, I've no suspicions,' declared the Commanding Officer.

"He never faltered. At that moment he had the certitude. The air of the chart-room was thick with guilt and falsehood braving the discovery, defying simple right, common decency, all humanity of feeling, every scruple of conduct.

"The Northman drew a long breath. 'Well, we know that you English are gentlemen. But let us speak the truth. Why should we love you so very much? You haven't done anything to be loved. We don't love the other people, of course. They haven't done anything for that either. A fellow comes along with a bag of gold. . . . I haven't been in Rotterdam my last voyage for nothing.'

"'You may be able to tell something interesting, then, to our people when you come into port,' interjected the Officer.

"'I might. But you keep some people in your pay at Rotterdam. Let them report. I am a neutral—am I not? . . . Have you ever seen a poor man on one side and a bag of gold on the other? Of course, I couldn't be tempted. I haven't the nerve for it. Really I haven't. It's nothing to me. I am just talking openly for once.'

"'Yes. And I am listening to you,' said the Commanding Officer, quietly.

"The Northman leaned forward over the table. 'Now that I know you have no suspicions, I talk. You don't know what a poor man is. I do. I

am poor myself. This old ship, she isn't much, and she is mortgaged, too. Bare living, no more. Of course, I wouldn't have the nerve. But a man who has nerve! See. The stuff he takes aboard looks like any other cargo—packages, barrels, tins, copper tubes—what not. He doesn't see it work. It isn't real to him. But he sees the gold. That's real. Of course, nothing could induce me. I suffer from an internal disease. I would either go crazy from anxiety—or—or—take to drink or something. The risk is too great. Why—ruin!'

"'It should be death.' The Commanding Officer got up, after this curt declaration, which the other received with a hard stare oddly combined with an uncertain smile. The Officer's gorge rose at the atmosphere of murderous complicity which surrounded him, denser, more impenetrable, more acrid than the fog outside.

"'It's nothing to me,' murmured the Northman, swaying visibly.

"'Of course not,' assented the Commanding Officer, with a great effort to keep his voice calm and low. The certitude was strong within him. 'But I am going to clear all you fellows off this coast at once. And I will begin with you. You must leave in half an hour.'

"By that time the Officer was walking along the deck with the Northman at his elbow.

"'What! In this fog?' the latter cried out, huskily.

"'Yes, you will have to go in this fog.'

"'But I don't know where I am. I really don't.'

"The Commanding Officer turned round. A sort of fury possessed him. The eyes of the two men met. Those of the Northman expressed a profound amazement.

"'Oh, you don't know how to get out.' The Commanding Officer spoke with composure, but his heart was beating with anger and dread. 'I will give you your course. Steer south-by-east-half-east for about four miles and then you will be clear to haul to the eastward for your port. The weather will clear up before very long.'

"'Must I? What could induce me? I haven't the nerve.'

"'And yet you must go. Unless you want to——'

"'I don't want to,' panted the Northman. 'I've enough of it.'

"The Commanding Officer got over the side. The Northman remained still as if rooted to the deck. Before his boat reached his ship the Commanding Officer heard the steamer beginning to pick up her anchor. Then, shadowy in the fog, she steamed out on the given course.

"'Yes,' he said to his officers, 'I let him go.'"

The narrator bent forward towards the couch, where no movement betrayed the presence of a living person.

"Listen," he said, forcibly. "That course would lead the Northman straight on a deadly ledge of rock. And the Commanding Officer gave it to him. He steamed out—ran on it—and went down. So he had spoken the truth. He did not know where he was. But it proves nothing. Nothing either way. It may have been the only truth in all his story. And yet . . . He seems to have been driven out by a menacing stare—nothing more."

He abandoned all pretence.

"Yes, I gave that course to him. It seemed to me a supreme test. I believe—no, I don't believe. I don't know. At the time I was certain. They all went down; and I don't know whether I have done stern retribution—or murder; whether I have added to the corpses that litter the bed of the unreadable sea the bodies of men completely innocent or basely guilty. I don't know. I shall never know."

He rose. The woman on the couch got up and threw her arms round his neck. Her eyes put two gleams in the deep shadow of the room. She knew his passion for truth, his horror of deceit, his humanity.

"Oh, my poor, poor——"

"I shall never know," he repeated, sternly, disengaged himself, pressed her hands to his lips, and went out.

Marriages in Slum-Land.

By CAPEL LANE.

Illustrated by G. L. Stampa.

MY readers should be told, to start with, that I am a parson working in a poverty-stricken parish in a large city, and that I am simply relating some of my own actual experiences. Except in one obvious paragraph all the names employed are fictitious, even my own.

In my humble opinion it would be a mistake to read what I have written as a collection of odd or unusual incidents. On the contrary, they are straws which show how the wind blows. They indicate the mental and moral atmosphere in which we pass our days, the result, of course, of our extreme poverty. According to official returns made before the war, ninety per cent. of us were either living on a regular wage of from twenty to twenty-three shillings a week, or else on uncertain and casual earnings, and, in spite of all the fine things ever said in praise of poverty, Gray's famous Elegy was right in calling it "chilling," a thing that freezes every "genial current of the soul."

Before the war every single marriage which took place in my church was after banns, and even now, when they do occasionally take place by licence, the licence is only of the cheap half-guinea variety, specially provided for soldiers and sailors. We have hereabouts to look at every penny we spend, even about marriage, and sometimes economy takes strange shapes. I recollect a certain young lady who came one day to put up the banns, but who did not come to be married within the three months which followed. Then they ran out. Later she came and put them up for the second time, arranging at the same moment for the marriage to take place on the Monday which would follow the third calling. On the Saturday which fell before this last event I met the girl's mother in the street.

"Well," I said, "is Lizzie coming to be married next Monday?"

"No, sir," she replied, "she isn't. She went to call on the young man three times last week and found him drunk each time. So she simply won't marry him."

I expressed my approval and sympathy.

"But it's all right, sir," she continued. "She's got another young man, and what she wants to know is whether the same banns won't do."

I do not mind confessing that at first I felt strongly inclined to say "yes." But I didn't, because it occurred to me that a three weeks' study of the other young man might be of

"A BLUSHING BUT CAUTIOUS YOUNG PERSON WAS SHOWN INTO MY STUDY."

service, and I think I am right in saying that the event justified me. The girl is still a spinster.

A sad case comes to my memory, also showing how desirable cheapness is. Being under a pressing necessity, a girl applied to me to marry her without fees. In the vestry after the ceremony I asked how they managed to procure the ring, and the answer was that they had borrowed four-and-sixpence from "Mother Adams." Now Mrs. Adams I knew to be a regular money-lender, lending at the rate of interest usual about here—one penny per shilling per week. So naturally I asked whether they were going to pay fourpence-halfpenny a week interest until the debt was all paid, and the answer was in the affirmative. That was a little too much for me, and I promptly bought Mrs. Adams out of the business, on a promise to pay me threepence a week instead. In this way the ring would have been paid for in eighteen weeks. I regret to have to add that not a single penny has come my way so far, though the marriage took place eight years ago.

A blushing but cautious young person was once shown into my study. She came, she said, to inquire how much it would cost to get married. A printed table of fees was put into her hand, and she retired saying she would "consider of it." Ten minutes later she returned to put up the banns, and then to my astonishment she asked me to name the day and hour. I suggested that the young man might like to be consulted, but that suggestion she dismissed with contempt and despatch. The young man, she said, would come when I told him to come, and so would she. That was the first and the only time I ever fixed the date of a wedding. Even my own was settled for me.

In our parish, almost without exception, the woman makes all the arrangements. Sometimes also she pays the fees, though the man usually does so. A few weeks back an experience befell me which is quite without precedent. "What's the fee, guv'nor?" asked a jovial-looking bridegroom. "Seven-and-seven," I said. "Five shillings for the marriage and two-and-seven for the marriage lines." Putting his hand into his pocket, he produced four shillings. Then, turning to his bride, he said, "There, that's my little bit. Now you do your bit." Which she did without showing the least sign that she thought the step unusual, as far as I could discover.

Evidence of the confidence which a slummer has in his parson is never far to seek, and the feeling is not confined to the slummer. A tall, burly member of the dockers' fraternity once made an appeal to me. Whispering into my ear before the ceremony, he said, "Sir, I'm not used to this sort of thing. I want you to see me through, and here's an extra five bob for doing it." I took the five bob. It enabled me to do what I should like to

"I WANT YOU TO SEE ME THROUGH, AND HERE'S AN EXTRA FIVE BOB FOR DOING IT."

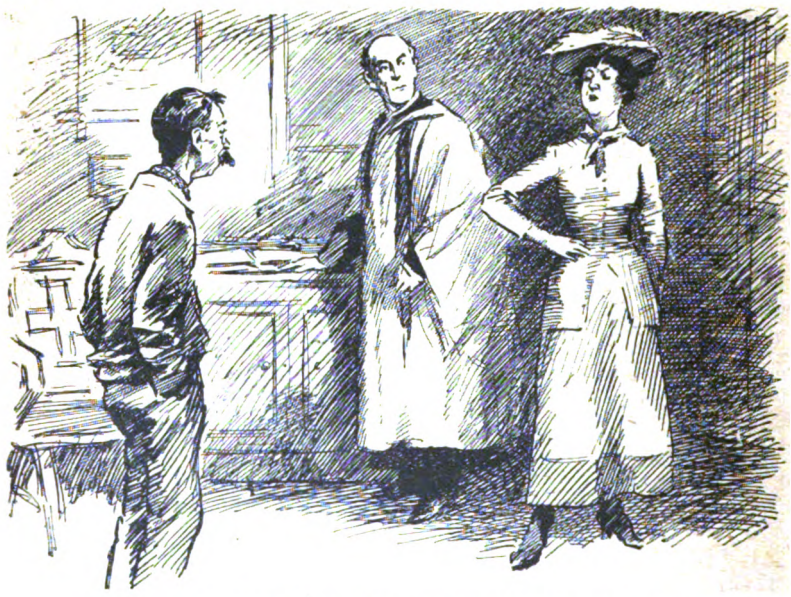
be able to do oftener. I was able to make a wedding present to a parishioner—his bride.

I seem to have quite a number of couples whose banns have been called, but who have never turned up to be married, and it is a curious fact, explain it how you will, that this happens more often when one or both of the parties have been married before than when they are bachelor and spinster. *Punch* once gave a famous piece of advice to those about to marry—"Don't." Shall we be far wrong if we assume that these widowers and widows would say the same, speaking from experience? In that case the request for publication of banns must be looked upon as a momentary act of passing insanity. Sometimes, beyond doubt, there are other reasons of a more tragic nature, as the following letter goes to show:—

"Sir, I Beg to inform you that the mariage that is to take place hear on thursday will not be leagle as I Mrs. North is still alive if the mariage take place I shall have my husband for Bigamy and you for performing the mariage when I mrs. North is still alive. This is the truth you call him at one side and ask him and then he will not know how to answer you this is the truth on my Oath. From a poor derserted woman."

I give this letter just as it stands pasted in my Banns Book. I was not, however, able to do anything in the matter. The addresses given for the banns proved false, my correspondent did not give any address at all, and the parties did not come to be married. But, assuming the facts to be as stated, it would be difficult to find a more cogent argument in favour of the old Church methods for avoiding secret marriages. The clergy, I fear, are too much in the habit of taking marriages as they come, and I never heard of a registrar's office which did anything else. A few judicious inquiries at the alleged dwelling-places might prevent many a story of lifelong misery.

Volumes might be written, I suppose, of the blunders made at the ceremony itself, and, indeed, it rarely is wanting in a point or two of piquant interest. One Christmas Eve, for instance, I came very near making a serious mistake. It is our custom to obtain the particulars required for the registers before the church ceremony commences, and so our verger has instructions to show bride and bridegroom into the vestry for the purpose as soon as they come. On this occasion two couples had appointed the same hour, and it so happened that the man of the one party and the woman of the other came rather earlier than was expected. Without detecting his error, the verger sent in this pair and the particulars were duly obtained. Then, since the other pair were behind time, I put on my surplice and said I would not ask them to wait. Straightway I found myself confronted by an indignant woman. "She hadn't come," she said, "to be married to a measly fellow like that!" The man's temper, however, was not disturbed. With a twinkle in his eye he observed, "Measly, am I? Well, that's why I want a better woman than you." I was grateful to that man. His smile and his good temper ultimately sent all parties home enjoying the joke.



"'SHE HADN'T COME,' SHE SAID, 'TO BE MARRIED TO A MEASLY FELLOW LIKE THAT!'"

Quite a pathetic interest attaches to another

couple married that same day. The man appeared with a huge black eye and in a dazed condition generally. He explained that on the previous night he became unwillingly involved in a quarrel between two of his friends, both of whom wanted to be his best man, and they did not settle the matter without a three-cornered fight!

The friends' interest must, I think, be sometimes rather embarrassing. I married a couple some few years back who supply an almost incredible story pointing that way. The man was twenty, the girl eighteen, and I had known them intimately from childhood. When I asked why they wanted to be married so early in their courtship, they replied that the bride's sister (who was far advanced in consumption) was very "ambitious" to be a bridesmaid before she died, and that her sister was willing to "oblige" her. That reply appeared to me to be a tough bit to swallow, and I made it my business to sound the girl's parents on the point. Then I found to my astonishment that it was her father who was really pressing the marriage forward, and that his main reason was as stated to me.

"IT WAS ONCE MY LOT TO SEE A BRIDEGROOM WEEPING COPIOUSLY THE WHOLE TIME."

As a rule parents don't count hereabouts as friends. Said one of my colleagues to a mother one day, "Sorry not to see either you or your husband at your daughter's wedding last Sunday—the first to be married, too." "Well, you see, mum," the woman answered, "me and my old man are getting too old for them kind of festivities." The reply is not surprising. We are by now accustomed to seeing young people going their way in life as if their fathers and mothers had nothing to do with it.

There is a sort of notion about that in the slums people marry at an earlier age than they should. My registers will not lend support to that idea. The average age of the bridegroom for the last five years works out at twenty-five, of the bride at twenty-four, and there have been few high figures to send the average up. Only eighteen persons, all told, have been over forty.

I cannot say I never saw the parents present at a wedding, as the following incident will prove. Many people have seen brides in a tearful condition. It was once my lot to see a bridegroom weeping copiously the whole time. It was about as much as I could do to get him to answer my questions and to repeat the vows. Indeed, I did tell him at last that I hoped he understood he need not be married unless he wished! But we were all dominated by a masterful mother-in-law. It was she who put up the banns, made all the arrangements, and hovered over us all the time to see that the business was properly concluded. What hold she had over the man did not appear. Neither did any of his own friends. So the old lady had a clear course, and the unwilling man and the maid—none too willing either, I thought—are now man and wife. Would it be believed that he was twenty-five and the girl twenty-three?

In these days, when love-letters are apt to become public property, it is a real comfort to know that there still exist people who can't write them, in spite of all that the education authorities have done. Would it be believed that in the year of grace 1913 two girls were married, one twenty-three and the other nineteen, and both of them had to put crosses where they should have signed their names? I can even go one better. For in September, 1911, I married a couple neither of whom could write their own names, and

neither could their two witnesses. All four had to put crosses. Surely that is a "record," even though it be also true that compulsory schooling had become law just about the time they were all born. With one letterless person I was much struck. He was of refined manner and speech and quite up to the average in brain-power, I should have said. He stated that he was a Londoner born and bred, and his age was twenty-eight. Yet he said he had never been to school and could neither read nor write. He was unable or unwilling to tell me how he escaped the attentions of the school attendance officers, but I have since found reason to know that his account of himself is correct in every particular.

A marriage register would not usually be classed with light literature. Yet I have never found it difficult to amuse myself with mine for half an hour or so. Marriages are made, we know, in heaven, but what wonderful Providence assorts the names? It is curious, to say the least of it, that a Bishop should marry a Parson, a Button should marry a Taylor, an Ireland a Driscoll, a Newman an Angell, a Carter a Steed. Sands are, we know, proverbially thirsty, but not likely to be slaked with Wines. A Winter might be expected to produce Pooles, and, as a matter of fact, she has done so. Why should the most unkempt person I ever saw in my life sign himself as Tidy? In charity we may suppose that he does tidy himself sometimes. I can personally testify on the evidence of my eyes and nose that he didn't do so for his sister's wedding.

Looking through my entries for a certain year I am reminded of a most curious episode, and with that I will come to a finish. I was actually conducting the service, and had got as far as asking the man whether he "would have this woman to be his wedded wife." Instead of giving the usual assent he touched his forelock and said, "Beg pardon, sir, I *am* married already. *I* don't want to marry this woman. It's Bob down there in that pew who is to be her husband." So Bob was promptly brought up out of his pew, and the rest followed in due order. But I have always thought it a marvellous thing that he had sat there so long, smilingly looking on and apparently contented; still more so that his best man, already married and presumably knowing something of the routine, should have given me all the particulars about himself in the vestry ready for the registers, should have seen me write them down in my book, and yet have made not the least sign of impatience or the least move to put me right; and, most wonderful of all, that Bob's future partner never made any move at any part of the proceedings to secure that she should be married to the right man. Verily Carlyle had something to go upon when he declared that the population of these isles are "mostly fools."

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 34.

One we devour and Two we eat,
For mind and body they are meat.
One is "continued in our next."
When Two is scarce we're greatly vexed.
Though different spellings you must frame,
Pronunciation is the same.

1. If but the bag were red, I see
   That holy it would have to be.
2. Insert twice fifty; you'll agree
   Most readily that it is she.
3. Thus your umbrella you may find,
   Though neither lost nor left behind.
4. A Gallic friend, and I will state
   'Tis clear he never can be late.
5. Here British crop, Helvetian lake,
   Induce us Spanish name to take.
6. To suffer Henry some may see,
   But, otherwise, 'twill deadly be.

——— QUÆSTOR.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 35.

Our name and our address you need:
They are before you as you read.

1. Where children work, and sometimes play,
   And masters earn but little pay.
2. A short, but furious, hurricane,
   With lightning and torrential rain.
3. The best of motives we can trace—
   The cash is in the proper place.
4. 'Tis surely clear that left is right,
   And may be seen within the light.
5. Comparing man with wood, may be
   Described as human ebony.
6. The same, with letter added, shows
   A place that many a punter knows. PAX.

———

Answers to Acrostics 34 *and* 35 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on October 9th.*

The answer to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper, and each must be signed with the solver's pseudonym.

Two answers may be sent to any or every light.

———

ANSWER TO No. 33.

1. A	la	D
2. U	tterance	E
3. T	ur	M
4. O	li	O
5. C	limacteri	C
6. R	ubbe	R
7. A	ntenn	A
8. C	C	C
9. Y	sa	Y

NOTES.—Light 1. Aladdin. 3. Turmoil. 7. Anna, ten. 9. Ysaye.

———

The third light of No 32 is somewhat vague, and appears to be capable of many good answers. All words sent in are accepted as correct.

Blood and Iron.

A Play in One Act.

By

PERLEY POORE SHEEHAN and ROBT. H. DAVIS.

Illustrated by Steven Spurrier.

Arrangements are being made for producing this extraordinary little play on the stage both in this country and in America. The effect cannot fail to be most thrilling.

Cast of Characters.

THE EMPEROR.
THE SCIENTIST.
NUMBER 241.

THE EMPEROR: A person attired in military costume, indicating the highest order of elaborate modern mode, sage green in tone. He wears a short, olive-coloured cape coat, the left flap of which is thrown back disclosing: (1) the Order of Merit; (2) the Triple Cross; (3) a seven-starred emblem of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, known as the Reward of Heaven, designed by the EMPEROR himself and bestowed by the grace of the Almighty upon His Majesty's Imperial person.

THE SCIENTIST: A small, thin man, garbed in frock-suit, flowing black tie; thin of face; bulging eyes; horn spectacles; heavy head of grey hair; thin, straggly, grey beard and small moustache. He is very animated. He wears a long, Inverness style dark overcoat, and carries a portfolio containing reports and statistical matter.

NUMBER 241: Stands six feet; is very erect and stiff of posture; closely-cropped hair; large face, rather heavy of expression. Upon entering he is garbed in full-length war-grey cloak, with wide band at waist buttoned in front; the conventional metal war-helmet now in general use; hands in white cotton gloves. He moves with the deliberation of an automaton. In reality he is fifty per cent. human and fifty per cent. machine, being composed of: (1) left artificial leg; (2) two artificial hands; (3) artificial right forearm and elbow; (4) artificial left eye, which SCIENTIST has converted into a telescope; (5) artificial left ear, which is also a telephone; (6) all his teeth are metal—synthetic gold—but cheaper and harder. He can bite barbed wire in twain. Underneath his great cloak he wears the regulation infantry uniform and a bayonet in a scabbard. His speech is laboured.

SCENE: Private audience chamber of an Emperor, in purple and gold, with magnificent throne-chair carved elaborately, a canopy extending over the seat. Regal flat-top table left-centre containing mounted figure of THE EMPEROR in bronze and a large mushroom gold gong. A purple-and-gold cloth falls over both ends of the table. The cloth is decorated with crown and sceptre. Heavy purple curtains fall from back wall. A modern rifle leans against the left back corner.

(At rise of curtain stage empty. ENTER the EMPEROR, followed by the SCIENTIST—the EMPEROR with a curt and preoccupied air, the SCIENTIST with an air of fawning enthusiasm.)

EMPEROR (*crossing toward throne-chair, in which he seats himself*): Proceed! Proceed!

SCIENTIST (*placing portfolio on table and smilingly rubbing his hands*): Modesty, Sire, causes me to falter.

EMPEROR (*without enthusiasm*): My time is limited. The Crown Prince awaits me.

SCIENTIST (*quivering with enthusiasm*): When your Majesty comprehends this greatest of all birthday gifts!—a million cripples trans-

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formed into a million fighting units!—your Majesty's might becomes terrible!

EMPEROR (*indulgently*): Generalities!

SCIENTIST: I particularize (*as* EMPEROR *makes sharp gesture that he is ready to listen*). The keynote of efficiency is the elimination of waste. Our problem was to eliminate the waste represented by the wounded. In brief, we have succeeded.

EMPEROR (*beginning to display interest*): How so?

SCIENTIST: After countless experiments we can now take a soldier, no matter how badly wounded, and return him to the trenches—a super-soldier—no longer a bungling, mortal man—but a beautiful, efficient machine!

"YOU ASK ME, YOUR MAJESTY, IF HE IS EFFICIENT. I REPLY,

EMPEROR (*laughing*): You are enthusiastic but—not contagious! (*deprecatory gesture*)—but—(*sternly*)—your promises have not always been kept. The proof!

SCIENTIST (*with impulsive devotion*): Your Majesty, I foresaw your doubts. I brought——

EMPEROR: Ha! A—specimen!

SCIENTIST (*appreciating the jeu d'esprit*): Perfectly! He is in the ante-room.

EMPEROR (*curtly*): Bring him in! Bring him in!

SCIENTIST: Er—I beg your Majesty's pardon—but—he is not—altogether pleasant to look upon.

EMPEROR: Nonsense! Whatever makes for the strength of the dynasty is agreeable to the Imperial eyes.

SCIENTIST (*with tremulous delight*): May I?

EMPEROR: Certainly! Make haste!

SCIENTIST (*nimbly crosses to door, opens it, and ejaculates command*): Attention! Forward! Hep! (*There is a momentary silence, then a metallic clatter as if caused by a movement of iron, then a heavy step.* ENTER 241, *erect, with measured tread, observing nothing. He comes down to centre of stage, where he stops in response to the* SCIENTIST'S *order*): Halt!

(*As* 241 *stands at military attention the* SCIENTIST, *with manifest delight, flutters bowing before* EMPEROR *and explains*) The ultimate triumph!—our two hundred and forty-first experiment. Hence—Number Two Hundred and Forty-One! (*During this explanation*

MORE EFFICIENT THAN BEFORE HE FELL IN BATTLE."

241 does not stir. The EMPEROR *stares at 241 with a sort of horrified fascination.*)

EMPEROR: He—marches—splendidly!

SCIENTIST: The least of his accomplishments. Permit me! (*returns to 241, whom he prods. 241 remaining impassive*). Magnificent! (*gesture of approval as he carries on inspection of arms, hands, body, and head of 241. Runs finger around left eye, taps gently left ear. Contemplates ensemble and makes gesture for 241 to open mouth. 241 opens mouth and shows glittering array of metallic teeth: he shuts them with click like a steel trap*). Perfection! Right arm! (241 *lifts right arm in stiff but sweeping gesture*). Left knee! (241 *crooks left knee twice*). Hands! (241 *opens and closes both cotton-gloved hands and manipulates fingers*).

EMPEROR: You guarantee his efficiency?

SCIENTIST: Absolutely.

EMPEROR: Demonstrate.

SCIENTIST (*approaches 241, who continues to stand immobile, and very swiftly removes helmet, long cloak, and cotton gloves, disclosing two metallic hands and wrists*): You ask me, your Majesty, if he is efficient. I reply, more efficient than before he fell in battle (*crosses to corner and gets rifle. Returns to centre*). Two forty-one, attention! Observe, your Majesty! (SCIENTIST *tosses rifle to 241, who catches it surely but stiffly in his metal hands, against which the weapon clangs.* SCIENTIST *puts 241 through manual of arms. The whole scene following is punctuated by military commands in the following order*):—

"Attention!"
"Carry arms!"
"Present arms!"
"Shoulder arms!"
"Parade rest!"

And now, your Majesty, mark this! (*resuming orders*):—

"Fix bayonets!"
"Make ready!"
"Aim!"
"Fire!"

(241 *completes manœuvres by pulling trigger and snapping lock, whereupon* SCIENTIST *takes rifle and tosses it to settee*).

EMPEROR (*leaning forward with look of*

wonderment in his face): Colossal! (241 *comes to attention and is inert again.*)

SCIENTIST: Are not the possibilities impressive?

EMPEROR: Beyond our dreams!

SCIENTIST: I estimate the restoration of five army corps now immobilized because of missing arms and legs, deafened ears and blinded eyes.

EMPEROR (*meditatively*): Something of a shock—to—civilization!

SCIENTIST (*exultant*): Stupendous! We recruit from the hospitals!

EMPEROR (*with dawning realization of the magnitude of the suggestion*): And the hospitals are overflowing! My dear Professor! Science is the hope of the dynasty——

SCIENTIST: Is it not amazing?

EMPEROR: Quite!

SCIENTIST (*proceeding with examination*): A test for the ear! (SCIENTIST *taps left ear of* 241 *gently, then crosses behind throne-chair right and makes three inaudible taps on back of chair discernible to audience, while* 241 *bends ear attentively in that direction, half-turning body.* SCIENTIST *reappears.* 241 *resumes original posture, salutes, and holds up three fingers.*)

EMPEROR (*peering around at* SCIENTIST): What are you doing?

SCIENTIST: I tapped the throne three times, very gently. Did your Majesty not hear?

EMPEROR: No.

SCIENTIST: Ah, but the supersoldier did—ten paces distant! It is stupendous. (*He crosses to table, opens portfolio, takes out a small white card.*) (*To* EMPEROR): With your permission. (*To* 241): What is written hereon? (241 *closes right eye and stares fixedly with left.*)

241: Noth—ing.

SCIENTIST (*smiles knowingly at* EMPEROR. *Turns card over*): Ah, very good. (SCIENTIST *holds card up again*): Once more.

241 (*after a moment of staring he reads deliberately*): A—nation's—will—should—be—the—will—to—power!

EMPEROR (*takes card from* SCIENTIST *and glances at it*): Correct!

SCIENTIST (*crossing to centre and returning card to portfolio, then addressing* EMPEROR): This is my greatest achievement. Never has science done so much for the human animal. From a shattered, bleeding wreck of no value to his country I have made him into an efficient man—hands of steel, leg of bronze, arm of nickel and aluminium, telescopic eye, an ear that—— (241 *bends his ear off stage left*).

EMPEROR (*startled*): You hear something? What do you hear?

241: A—bugle-call—sounding the assembly!

EMPEROR: Impossible! Open the door! (SCIENTIST *opens door and distant bugle-call is faintly heard off stage.*)

EMPEROR (*in astonishment*): God in heaven! Miraculous! (*as* SCIENTIST *gently closes door aglow with triumph*). What have you accomplished?

SCIENTIST (*with fervour*): A resurrection!

EMPEROR: Complete!

SCIENTIST: A triumph over matter. The fragment of a soldier reconstructed under the magic touch of science, without which he would to-day be rotting on the field—a source of pestilence—a worthless thing. Science set him on his feet, gave him a leg, an arm, hands, a telephonic ear, a telescopic eye!

EMPEROR (*leans back and deliberately inspects* 241): How long have you been in my service? (241 *hesitates and salutes.*)

SCIENTIST: You may speak.

241: Eighteen—years—Majesty.

EMPEROR: Married?

241: Yes, Majesty.

EMPEROR: Children?

241: Seven—Majesty.

SCIENTIST: Five sons!

241 (*bitterly*): One dead—three—at—the—Front—my youngest follows——

EMPEROR: His age?

241 (*swallowing*): Sixteen.

EMPEROR (*coldly, to* SCIENTIST, *referring to* 241): When does *his* furlough end?

SCIENTIST: Noon to-morrow. By nightfall he will again be in the trenches.

EMPEROR (*reflectively*): And if he returns—I will award him the Triple Cross. (*More brightly*): This will stimulate the military ardour of the Crown Prince. It will delight him to see this—reassembled soldier.

SCIENTIST (*recalling an important detail*): And moreover, your Majesty, there is this aspect to be considered. We are manufacturing human extremities on a standard interchangeable basis. For example, as your Majesty perceives, this left leg (*picks up ruler from desk and raps left leg of* 241, *which gives out metallic ring*) is metal. As is also his left forearm, including the elbow (*taps it*). And both hands. (*Taps them also.* 241 *receives these attentions stoically as each member of his body clangs in a different note.*) Furthermore, your gracious Majesty, if any or all of these parts are shattered in the course of battle our corps of trained mechanicians, ever at hand, supplies the parts by numbers, and the fighting unit embodied in the individual returns with but little loss of time and the

minimum of inconvenience to your Majesty's service.

EMPEROR: What does he weigh?

SCIENTIST: Equipped? (EMPEROR *nods.*) One hundred and seventy-five pounds.

EMPEROR: And without his equipment?

SCIENTIST: One hundred and five.

EMPEROR (*brushing his hand across his forehead*): Little more than half a man.

SCIENTIST: True, your Majesty. And therefore requires but half the rations, half the care of a whole unit. There is that much less to nourish.

EMPEROR: You have brought the greatest advance in the history of civilization. Tell me, what else of the telescopic eye? That interests me. I shall be surprised at nothing. Your achievements baffle.

SCIENTIST: The telescopic eye, your Majesty (SCIENTIST *circles the left eye of* 241 *with his finger*), is superior to the human eye in two important characteristics. First, it possesses the telescopic quality as you have observed; and, second, its power is undiminished by darkness.

EMPEROR (*with incredibility*): You mean he can see in the dark?

SCIENTIST: Just that. And moreover, your Majesty——

EMPEROR: Halt! This is very interesting. We will test that also. Demonstrate.

SCIENTIST (*dubiously*): Does your Majesty object to darkness?

EMPEROR (*hesitates; then replies with an effort*): No. The electric switch is there. (*Points to white button on the table.*)

SCIENTIST (*to* 241): Right about face! Give attention to his Majesty! (SCIENTIST *crosses to table and lays his finger beside the button.* 241 *observes the whole transaction carefully. To* EMPEROR): I will switch off the light. Be so kind as to perform any act you may, and he will describe your movements. Are you ready?

EMPEROR (*bracing himself in the chair*): Lights out! (SCIENTIST *presses button. Stage is in total darkness.*) Describe my movements as they occur.

VOICE OF SCIENTIST (*to* 241): Do you understand his Majesty?

VOICE OF 241: Yes. He—leans—forward—in—his—chair. He—lifts—both—his—hands. The—palms—come—together. He—bows—his—head—in—prayer.

VOICE OF EMPEROR (*sharply*): Lights! (SCIENTIST *presses button. Lights on, disclosing* EMPEROR *exactly in the attitude described by* 241, *with a startled look on his face, palms still together.*)

SCIENTIST: Enough, your Majesty?

EMPEROR (*relaxing nervously*): It is beyond human understanding. (*Recovers himself and rises.*) And it gives me infinite happiness to bestow upon you this mark of our esteem (*takes from his own breast the Order of Merit and pins it on breast of* SCIENTIST). The Order of Merit! There is but one higher decoration—the symbol of Divine Right—the Reward of Heaven. (EMPEROR *lays his hand on the seven-starred emblem.*) Which I alone possess.

SCIENTIST (*overwhelmed, bows and kisses* EMPEROR'S *hand*): Your gracious Majesty! To have received this from your Imperial hand on your Majesty's birthday is indeed a distinction. (*A furtive glance escapes* 241, *a thin smile reveals his metallic teeth; a sinister look comes into his eyes.* EMPEROR *rescats himself with a gesture of benediction.*)

EMPEROR: I marvel at his dexterity—at his auricular powers—at his incomparable eyesight! What is his range of vision?

SCIENTIST: Your Majesty, he can see the enemy twenty or thirty miles away, count its cannon, its horses, its equipment.

EMPEROR (*quickly*): Wait! I will make another test. I carry next to my heart the smallest edition of the Bible extant. It can be read only under a microscope. Is that test too severe?

SCIENTIST: On the contrary, your Majesty, it is preferable. (*Crosses and takes Bible from* EMPEROR'S *hand. Turns to* 241.) Attention! Right about face! (241 *salutes.*) I open the book at haphazard. Read a verse from this page.

241: Matthew — fifth — chapter — fourth —verse. "Blessed — are — they — that — mourn—for—they—shall—be—comforted."

SCIENTIST: The fifth.

241: "Blessed — are — the — meek — for —they—shall—inherit—the—earth."

(SCIENTIST *turns to* EMPEROR *and bows, the book still open in his hands.*)

EMPEROR: He is right. I am familiar with Matthew. Turn to another page. (SCIENTIST *opens the Bible elsewhere. Holds it up.*)

SCIENTIST (*to* 241): Attention! Read!

241: Isaiah — third — chapter — fifteenth —verse. "What—mean—ye—that—ye—beat — my — people — to — pieces — and — grind — the — faces — of — the — poor — saith—the—Lord—God—of—Hosts."

EMPEROR: STOP! (EMPEROR *leans back in his chair under stress of great emotion, his hand sweeping his brow repeatedly.* SCIENTIST *closes the book, bows again with greater humility, and returns the book to* EMPEROR.)

EMPEROR (*takes book and thrusts it in his bosom*): His powers are diabolical. I wish to experiment with him alone. (*Relaxes and gazes vaguely into the distance.* SCIENTIST *drops portfolio and coat on settee.*) Hasten! I will summon you with that bell. (241 *remains stolidly at attention, an expression of awakening purpose in his eyes.*)

SCIENTIST: Your Majesty commands. (*Bows elaborately.* EXIT LEFT.) EMPEROR *with Imperial dignity stares* 241 *down after a duel of the eyes, imposing his will upon the soldier. Follows a moment of inspection in which wonderment is the dominant note. He rises from the throne and walks slowly half way around the impassive soldier, studying him critically.* EMPEROR'S *expression changes to bewilderment tinged with fear. The situation is uncanny.*

EMPEROR: Where were you born?

241: In—the—South—Majesty.

EMPEROR: Your trade?

241 (*with a helpless, involuntary gesture, extending his hands*): I—was—a—florist. (EMPEROR *stares at the metal hands,* 241 *observing the expression.*) I—made—bouquets. Not—with—these (EMPEROR *averts his face*) —but—with—my—absent—hands.

EMPEROR: War is not a festival of flowers.

241: Majesty—a wreath—I could make—slowly—for the dead. (*He leans toward the* EMPEROR.)

EMPEROR (*observing the somewhat cynical note of the soldier, assumes dignity*): Are you not grateful to science for these wonders performed? (241 *salutes.*) Speak!

241: What—shall—I—say?

EMPEROR: You are a man again—you are whole once more!

241: Yes—Majesty. But—my—heart—is —broken.

EMPEROR: Why?

241: My — people — are — starving — my —wife—is—lonely——

EMPEROR: Then you are not proud that science has found a way to double the strength of our army?

241: By — bringing — me — twice — to — slaughter.

EMPEROR (*leaning forward, with ferocity, his hands on the arms of his chair*): What, ingrate?

241: By — doubling — the — strength — of — your—army—you — have — multiplied —human—grief. (*Takes two steps laboriously toward* EMPEROR.)

EMPEROR: You dare rebel in the presence of your Emperor?

241: Dare? The—fear—has—gone—out — of — my—tortured — body—into — yours. (*Takes another step toward electric button, his heavy feet sounding ponderously.* EMPEROR *cowers back in the chair, hollow-eyed.*)

EMPEROR: Get down on your knees and crave your Emperor's pardon!

241: That — part — of — me — which — is — steel — cannot — bend — to — mortal — man. I—will—get—down—on—my—knees —only—to—God— and — ask — Him — to — forgive — me — what — I — now — intend — to—do. Twice—in—the—red—shambles—of —the—trenches! I—am—the—hope—of—the—dynasty! (*Throws his arm wide.*) No—I — am — the — hope — of — the — people! (*With trembling rigidity* 241 *reaches toward electric button.*) The—day—of—your—birth—shall — henceforth — be — known — as — the —day — of — your — death — and — celebrated—as—the—birthday—of—liberty! (241 *smashes electric button with his steel hand. Total darkness follows. Two slow footfalls are followed by a gasping intake of breath from the throne-chair.*)

VOICE OF EMPEROR (*in terror*): Lights! Lights!

VOICE OF 241: I—need—no—lights!

VOICE OF EMPEROR (*gaspingly*): Lights!

VOICE OF 241: You—have—made me—live—in the dark—and now you shall—die in the dark!

VOICE OF EMPEROR (*chokingly*): Mercy! Mercy!

VOICE OF 241: You—cannot—escape—me —in—the—shadows. I—can—see—you—I—can — hear — you. Come — to—my—iron—arms! Don't—tremble! Don't—shrink! Go —as — a — king — should — go — to — meet —the—King—of—Kings!

(*A rush of feet; an overwhelming impact of bodies; a shriek of agony from the depths; the overturning of the throne; a scuffle in which the human body mingles with the rattle of metal; a long, choking, gasping blast; a ripple of stertorous breath; the clink of metal as* 241 *gets to his feet. Silence. Again the ponderous footfalls are heard crossing the room, which is still in darkness.* 241 *puts on his overcoat, his helmet, etc. Footfalls are again heard crossing to the table.* 241 *presses the electric button. Lights.*)

(*There stands* 241 *in full equipment, the* EMPEROR *lying at the foot of the shattered throne, crumpled up in the most unkingly attitude, the emblem known as the Reward of Heaven glittering in the light.* 241 *bends down, rends it from the* EMPEROR'S *bosom, fixes it upon his own left breast, comes to attention, and rings the*

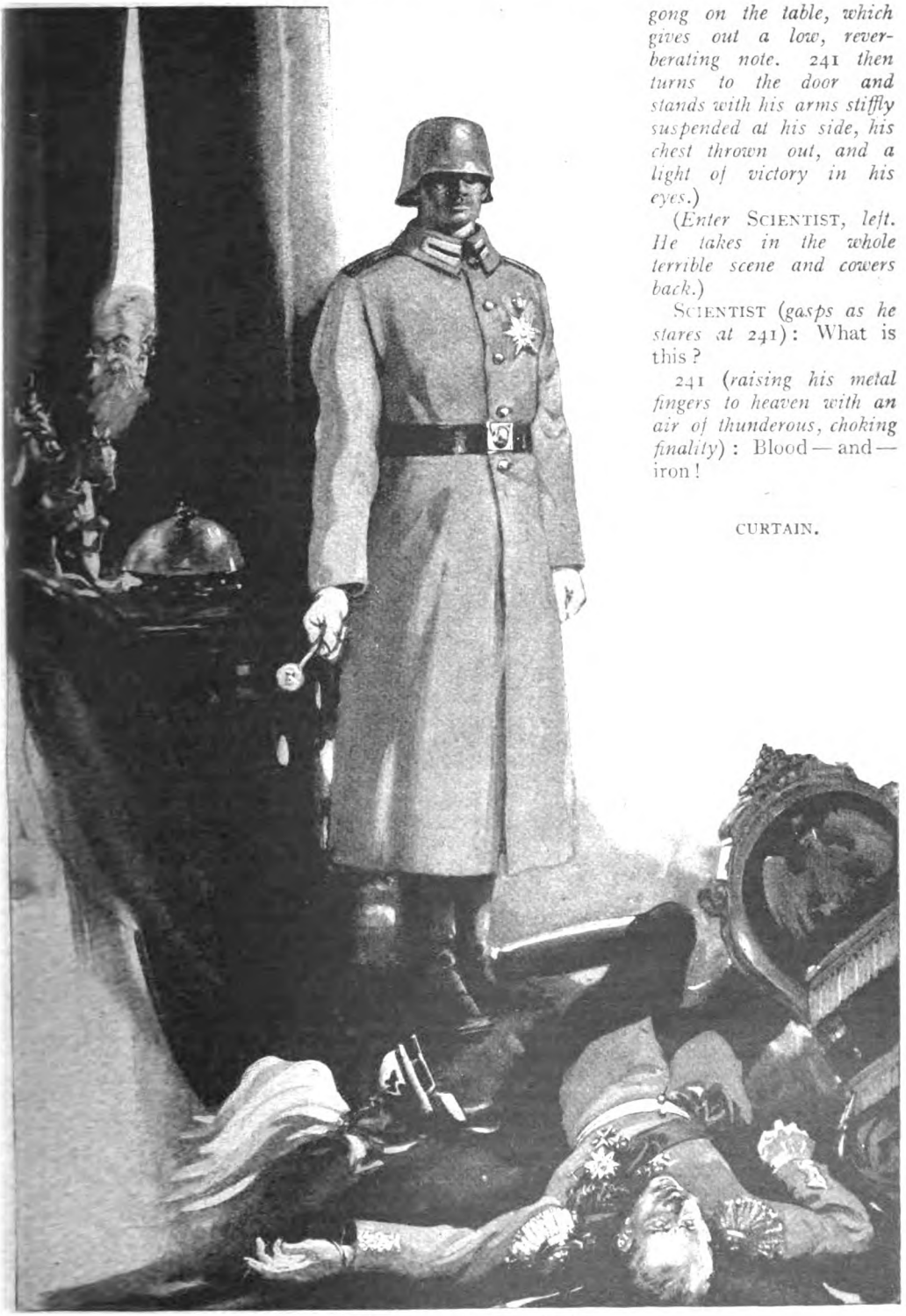
gong on the table, which gives out a low, reverberating note. 241 *then turns to the door and stands with his arms stiffly suspended at his side, his chest thrown out, and a light of victory in his eyes.*)

(*Enter* SCIENTIST, *left. He takes in the whole terrible scene and cowers back.*)

SCIENTIST (*gasps as he stares at* 241): What is this?

241 (*raising his metal fingers to heaven with an air of thunderous, choking finality*): Blood — and — iron!

CURTAIN.



"BLOOD — AND — IRON!"

THEY COME BACK.

By F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

WHITTINGHAM STREET, N., had benefited by the war. The long vista of its windows flush with the pavement was decent with curtains of a cleanness unwonted before the cataclysm. There were strange dots of reflected sunlight from brass door-handles and knockers that were polished. These things were symbols of the newly-realized importance of Whittingham Street's inhabitants in the scheme of society, an importance which, swiftly translated into self-esteem, expressed itself with a uniformity natural to life in a mean street. That house was poor indeed which did not possess its gramophone. The womenfolk were curiously predominant to those who remembered the old-time loungers at the corner "pubs," and that womenfolk, disdainful of the feathers of the long ago, was arrayed in startlingly smart, well-emphasized, cheap copies of the latest fashions, oddly incongruous with the tall, smoke-vomiting chimneys of Messrs. Hathaway's great factory, which closed the vista of the street. The sparseness of the men, immediately remarked, received a solemn significance from the flag-hung shrine on the wall of the Council School. The children who played in front of it—paper helmet, tin-can drum, and wooden sword—were vividly cognizant that this was a time of war.

It was evening, and from the great gates of Messrs. Hathaway's factory poured a ceaseless stream of women. But not this evening did that stream flow down the street with its usual swift and uninterrupted course. There were checks in it—obstacles of groups that talked excitedly and forgot to progress—while others in eager haste eddied round them. On the high wall by the gate a bill-poster was covering a "War Savings" placard by another of different meaning. A black cloud of smoke drifted away from the tall chimneys and was not reinforced other than by faint and lessening wisps.

A young woman, one of those whose urgent haste trifled not with talk, hurried down the street, stopped before one of the neatest house-fronts, tremblingly thrust a key into the latch, opened, and ran breathlessly upstairs.

A grey-haired old woman rose from a wooden chair by the side of a cradle in a clean and modestly-furnished room. At the entrance of her daughter-in-law she laid a finger on her lips and looked warningly to the infant. Then, remarking an obvious distress, she changed colour.

"What's the matter, Ann?" she whispered, shaking with a sudden alarm. She had to steady herself by the support of the table. "Not—Jim?"

The young woman shook her head, controlled her panting breath.

"Hathaway's!" she brought out. "Closing down!"

The elder stared speechlessly for a moment, then seated herself with that blank, mute resignation of the aged poor, long disillusioned of any title to good fortune. The fingers of her unshapely hands twined and untwined themselves tensely in her lap.

"Don't you hear, mother?" said the young woman, irritably. "Hathaway's are closing down!"

"Oh, dear!" The old woman raised a face that was strained with imminent tears. "I knew it 'ud never last—I knew it 'ud never last!"

"What we shall do, 'Eaven knows!" said Ann, viciously accenting the sole possible fount of knowledge. "They're all closing down—all of 'em, all round!" Her gesture, as she unpinned her hat and put it, with an excess of energy, on the table, testified to the completeness of the closed horizon. She stood looking at the sleeping child, her brows bent, her mouth troubled. Then suddenly she flung herself on her knees and buried her head in the old woman's lap, shaking with sobs.

"Oh, I did so want to keep it nice for Jim when 'e comes back! I did! I did! All we've got together. And now it'll all go—bit by bit! And I've worked so 'ard—so very 'ard! An' 'e'll never see, never know 'ow nice it was! Oh, mother!" She could utter no more words, only inarticulate sounds.

The old woman soothed her, stroking her hair.

"There, dear! there, dear! Don't take on! It'll all come right. I can go out again an' do a bit of cleanin'. I dare say Mrs. Smith'll take me on again. I ain't done no work for a long while—sitting 'ere eatin' your bread—I've 'ad a nice rest, I 'ave—I'm quite strong again now. We'll both get somethin', you see, dear!"

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"ANN READ OUT THE GREAT NEWS."

The young woman raised herself.

"No! No! No! You sha'n't work any more!" She turned her head wearily. "I can't make it out—*what's 'appening?* Why are they all shutting down like this?"

The old woman looked at her stupidly. The remote causes which made or unmade her unimportant existence were beyond her comprehension.

"What's that?" cried Ann, jumping to her feet. "*What's 'e calling?*"

The raucous shout of a newsvender floated up from the street. Ann listened for a moment—and then, after a hurried search for a halfpenny in her purse, dashed out of the door and down the stairs.

She reappeared after a bare minute, brandishing the newspaper, wild-eyed, panting.

"Mother! Mother!" She could not wait to enter the door before commencing her news. "It's Peace! *Peace!*" She struggled with the unfolded paper, crushed it together again, searching eagerly for the magic headlines. "Here it is! Listen!" The old woman, equally all trembling eagerness, was standing at her side, pawing vaguely at the arm which held the newspaper. Ann read out the great news. "'*The wild rumours current during the past few days have received a startling confirmation. It is announced that an armistice has been signed on all the fronts. This undoubtedly means a general Peace. The end of the war has come!*' Mother, it's all over—it's all over—and Jim'll be coming back! Oh, I can't 'ardly believe it! *It's all over!* Oh, thank God—thank God!"

"All over! My Jim! Safe and sound! Oh!" The old woman commenced that sniffling weep common to the aged and the young. "I can't 'elp it, Ann—I can't 'elp it!—I must cry!"

Ann dashed down the newspaper and flung her arms round the old woman in a close embrace. "Mother! Mother! I never was so"—and here a sob checked her speech also—"so 'appy in my life!" Face against face, the tears of the two women mingled—tears not of grief, but of emotion for which there was no expression. Somewhere down the street church bells were ringing in joyous peal on peal. It might have been merely a coincidence of practice, but to the two women whose simple souls beat close together, in a swoon of intense feeling that obliterated the sharp outlines of environment, this happy rioting of the bells seemed a holy blessing on the moment.

"Oh, Ann, dear! Ann, dear!" said the old woman, looking up. "What a thanksgiving it'll be for all the poor, anxious women!"

"Oh, we're very lucky—we're very lucky! Jim'll be coming back. Think of it, mother!"

They kissed one another as if each were kissing the man who would come back as son and husband.

"We've got to keep it for 'im," said Ann. "All the little 'ome. An' 'e'll soon be back to work for us an' the baby, an' we sha'n't never be parted any more! Oh, mother, think of the poor women who won't 'ave no one to come back to 'em! When they see 'em marching by! Oh—we're lucky, we're very lucky!"

The old woman stood staring out of the window in vague thought, her eye caught by the vivid red of the flags on the war shrine.

"It'll be a different world, Ann, when they all come back," she said. "Them what 'ave been left be'ind all through will find lots missing what they look for. And them what come back won't come back the same. It'll never be the same again, any of it—let's 'ope it'll be better."

They were coming back. The Mother-City of the Empire woke, silent of traffic, decked for a day that knew no sufficient parallel, the day when the thousands of her sons—those who had gone in their ones and twos, their single battalions—should march back from vast adventure in the full majesty of their corporate soldier-life. The London divisions were coming back from the war, were marching for the last time at full strength. And the London streets were tunnels of gay flags, walled with black masses of citizens kept clear from the sanded roadways. From every steeple the bells tossed out their exuberant rejoicing. In every breast of the millions there congregated was a surge of emotion that exhaled in one sustained murmur of the gladness for which there are no words, but which fills the eyes and chokes the throat.

They were coming! The thrilling blare of instruments of brass; the heart-stirring tap and roll and beat of the drums; the intoxicating, rhythmic swinging lilt and crash; the brave, gay runs of melody, sublimely simple, that bring the tears; the solid, even tramp of thousands who march as one—and the leading files were passing in a storm of cheers, a madness of waving hands. For the last time they passed, shoulder to shoulder in the familiar ranks, marching as they had marched for all the years of exile, marching as they had marched down the fatal roads to Loos and Gommecourt, Guillemont, and all those rubble-heaps where the bravest and the dearest of the greatest city of the world died for the fragment of a village and for England. Rifles at the slope; bare bayonets asserting the ancient privileges that they had won, oh so dearly, the right to flaunt; the heavy, weather-stained pack on the sturdy shoulders, the steel helmets awry with the tilt of long-familiar use, the brown, strong faces gleaming with their smiles—so they marched, not any more under the thunder of the guns, but in a frenzy of voices where the madly rioting bells were lost.

Battalion by battalion—all the glorious names, London's own; the London Scottish, (first in the fray in the long ago), the Queen's Westminsters, the Kensingtons, the London Rifle Brigade, the H.A.C., the numberless battalions of the London Regiment—they came, each with its aura of the deathless dead. They came from the interminable purgatory of the endless trenches, terminated at last, from the unimaginable inferno of Hill 60, from the hopeless dying of May the Ninth, from the fierce hopes, the bitter strife of Loos, from the massacre of Gommecourt and the bloody fights of Guillemont, of Vimy Ridge, of Messines, of a thousand places that were humble and are henceforth names of splendour. Miraculously strong, happy, pregnant with vivid life they emerged from that distant whelm of peril. And the eyes that had looked so long at death in the bare fields, pocked hideously with the disease of war, looked up now at the ranked tall buildings, so familiar and yet so strange, so impressively permanent after timeless æons of destruction. Behind those windows—could it be?—they had sat at desk through months and years. Between them and that past was a curtain of fire, of emotions that had transformed, of the intensity of life which has persisted in the face of death. And rank by rank, battalion after battalion, swinging with powerful stride, they marched back into the past that had seemed for ever gone.

And those who watched the level ranks flowing in their endless stream, cheering with throats now incapable of aught but the inarticulate cry, perceiving them mistily through a blur of tears, saw more than the men who marched, treading once again the asphalt of the London streets. They saw the ghosts of ranks, doubling—more than doubling—the ranks of living men, the ghosts of those who had looked as these looked, brown-faced, strong-limbed, the incarnation of living will, and were now no more than the wind blowing over the desolate countrysides where they had ceased to be. Yet were they present, the men who had died that England might live. The stir of their souls was in the skirling pipes, the wail and feverish beat of the fifes and drums, the maddening, purposeful blare and thud of the brass bands. They looked out of the eyes of those who marched—the soul unconquerable, the living spirit of the English race. And a divine afflatus swept over the waving, cheering crowds, swept them to a wilder intoxication.

One, whose faculty of speech was not yet overwhelmed, cried: "Three cheers for the boys who are left behind! Hurrah! Hurrah!——" and could not finish. And a woman who stood, tensely pallid, staring at the so-familiar badges of the troops who passed, stared at utter strangeness, and fell as dead.

The next battalion followed on, singing, carrying on a tune caught up far back along the route, the farewell song of Kitchener's Army of 1915, sung now as an instinctive antistrophe to that old chorale when they had marched to war:—

"Keep the home fires burning,
While your hearts are yearning;
Though your lads are far away, they dream of home.
There's a silver lining
Through the dark cloud shining;
Turn the dark cloud inside out
Till the boys come home!"

They passed in a roar of voices that drowned the band.

So the long, long columns of the London divisions tramped through the heart of the Mother-City, under the fluttering of countless flags, under the surge and resurge of joy-bells from every steeple, under great banners that proclaimed the gratitude of the City. Rank after rank they lifted their eyes to the laurel-green inscription that spanned the street at Temple Bar:—

"SHALL WE FORGET?—NEVER!"

Rank by rank they passed under the promise—the thousands of men welded in the fires of war to a wondrous miracle of collective soul—passed onward for the last time as one living unit, ere they should lay down their arms, *fall out*—and disperse, individuals that were fragments of a sacred memory, the shreds of a battle-flag distributed.

Sir Thomas Jackson Hathaway, Kt., Alderman of the City of London, looked along the masculine faces, spaced with the interstices of the departed ladies, of the little dinner-party of intimate friends, and then again to the brown, keen visage of his son. He pushed along the decanter—he was old-fashioned and made a virtue of it. "Fill up, Harry, my boy—I've been looking after the cellar while you've been away—there's more of it." He laughed a little at the mirth of his implied suggestion that there might possibly be a shortage in the cellars of Sir Thomas Hathaway. And his guests laughed a little in courtesy.

"We've kept the flag flying here also, my boy," said the big, heavily-jovial host, puffing hugely at his cigar and then taking it from his mouth to examine it with a superfluously critical eye. "You'll find things as well—better than when you left. You don't mind, gentlemen, this little talk of shop? After all, we're all friends together, and most of us have some small interest in the little business—ha! ha!" The guests were, in fact, Sir Thomas Hathaway's co-directors in the large enterprises he controlled. He continued: "Better, I may say, for we have been very conservative—we've looked to the younger generation away fighting our battles for us—and we've built up a reserve fund that a few years ago we shouldn't have dreamed of. You've come back to a first-class concern, Harry, my boy. Here's to it!" He raised and drained his glass, setting a followed example to his guests.

Captain Hathaway had been toying with a match on the tablecloth. He looked up—quiet and thoughtful, his face clean-cut and aristocratic by contrast with the heavy opulence of his sire.

"You don't anticipate Labour trouble, then, father?"

Sir Thomas Hathaway laughed—a guffaw—and crashed his hand on the table.

"Labour troubles, my boy! You need have no fear on that score. We're going to teach Labour a lesson. We haven't built up our reserve for nothing—not only ourselves, but all the houses in the trade. For long enough we've been dictated to by Labour—and now, by Heaven, we're going to crush it! Do you know what's coming, my boy? Have you thought about it? There's going to be the biggest flood of Labour chucked on the market that the world has ever known. All of 'em fightin'—*fightin'* for jobs! And the trade, Harry, my boy, is going to *lock out!* We're closed down now and we sha'n't open again till our own good time. How long d'you think the Union funds'll last? *We'll bust 'em*—bust 'em for ever and a day. And when we open our shops again to Labour—it'll be on our own terms! Here, fill up, gentlemen. I can vouch for this wine—cost a sinful price, it did! We'll bust 'em, my lad, so that never again in our time shall we hear a word of Labour trouble." He gulped the glassful of his sinfully-costly wine.

Captain Hathaway glanced round the table at the somewhat flushed, semi-senile features of his father's guests and partners. They were one and all nodding their heads in varying emphasis of approbation. He got up.

"Well, father, I don't think we'll discuss it now. Suppose we join the ladies?"

In the high drawing-room, softly lit with diffused radiance from the ceiling, draped with precious modern hangings that were genuine and spaced out with expensive antique paintings that were not, furnished with the luxury of a wealth too utterly complete in its overwhelming newness to allow imagination its leap across an artistic restraint, the ladies purred, or cooed in careful falsetto, as they awaited the entrance of the males. At a grand piano, slightly removed, a young woman with a delicately-refined face played softly to herself—in a quiet ecstasy of gladness for which this was the only satisfying expression.

Captain Hathaway, entering with his father's guests, came straight across to her, and she looked up, smiling, into her husband's face as though he had come in response to a murmured, summoning spell. She ceased, and leaned back

her head against him as he stood close behind her.

"Oh, Harry!" she said. "It's so lovely to have you again—for always, always!" Her eyes half-closed and her bosom heaved as she drank in an intoxicating realization of his definite return, sketched to herself a delicious little swoon.

"My dear!" he murmured. "It's good! Home—home for always with my beloved!"

She clutched at his hand, and for a moment, while the loud-voiced crowd vanished, they were secret lovers, snatched up to dizzy heights, intensely thrilling with an exquisite community, eyes looking into eyes and seeing more than human brain can translate of transcendent vision. She released him and bowed forward suddenly with a little gulp, striking, with trembling hands, vague chords on the piano.

"Now, Ethel, my dear," came the crass boom of her father-in-law's voice, "when you've finished your spooning, let's have something jolly. What about that bit out of 'Not a Word to the Wife'? Tra-lalala-la!" He sketched a hideous caricature of blatant banality. "We're all jolly to-night—none of your mooning sentiment, but jolly—eh, ladies and gentlemen?—properly jolly for Harry's first night back!"

Ethel got up from the piano, coupling an allegation of another's superior capacity with an invitation to perform, an invitation smirkingly accepted.

The slangy crash and bang alternating with hyper-emphasized sentimentality of the current tune was a cover under which Ethel Hathaway retreated to happy intimacy with her husband. Not for long was she allowed it. The very-consciously best-looking of the co-directors' wives sidled up and subsided into the adjacent chair. She yearned up into Captain Hathaway's face, while she cooed deprecation of her intrusion to his wife.

"But I do so want to hear how Captain Hathaway earned his Military Cross! Of course, I read all about it in the papers—but then—they're so bald, aren't they? One misses—what shall I say?—the human touch of heroism."

Mrs. Hathaway caught her husband's eye and forbade the instant flight.

"Tell Mrs. Jameson all about it, Harry," she commanded, coolly. There was something in the tone which rendered Mrs. Jameson's extorted confidence quite worthless.

"There's little to tell," said Captain Hathaway. "The fellow who really earned anything there was to get—and, I'm glad to say, got the D.C.M.—was one of my men, a chap named Jim Swain. He used to be in our employment, Ethel, by the way. It was a pretty tight corner, and I got practically left alone—all the other fellows knocked out—and this chap Swain came up with a bag of bombs—jolly plucky thing, for there didn't seem a dog's chance—and we chucked the bombs at the Hun till he didn't dare raise his head. After a bit, some of another company came up and we consolidated that bit of trench. That's all there was to it."

"Oh, how splendid!" Mrs. Jameson enthused, vaguely. "Leadership *is* everything, isn't it?"

"When you've got something to lead, Mrs. Jameson. One couldn't have better stuff than my men—they're magnificent. They're the nation—and now they're coming back they've got to be treated like the men they are and not like soulless machinery." He wound up on a note of fierce protest against something not obvious to his hearers.

"Now, Harry," said his wife. "Don't inflict your theories on Mrs. Jameson. We both of us positively refuse to be sympathetic with the working class, don't we, Mrs. Jameson?" She laughed lightly. "The working class is just as selfish as any other."

A wave of collective chatter from an approaching group engulfed this conversation.

Late that night Sir Thomas Hathaway sat alone with his son.

"Now, Harry, my lad," he said, "you're going to take Ethel away for a three months holiday. You've jolly well earned it, both of you. And when you come back you'll be head of Hathaway and Co. I've done my bit and I'm going to rest. My interest in the business is now being transferred into your name. That's my little present to you, my boy, by way of showing that I'm proud of you. And I know that you'll keep up the fine old traditions of the house, eh?"

The curtains had disappeared from the windows of Whittingham Street. The brass of the doors had lost its polish. The women who had tripped along in an earnest display of finery were replaced by blowsy, unkempt females who stood at the doors and gossiped. Once more the corners emphasized by the sordid public-houses were the idling-ground of groups of men, more numerous, shabbier even than of old. But these men had not the shiftless look of their predecessors. In their faces, thin and white, was a hardness which was odd in an urban population. In the eyes which followed the progress of a stranger up the street was a dangerous glare. The flags of the war shrine had disappeared; its gilt-inscribed panel was dingy and splashed with mud. At the far end of the street the great chimneys of Hathaway's works stuck up, clean of smoke, into a clear sky. The massive entrance gates were a closed wall across the vista.

In the little room to which Jim Swain had returned—after the days unnumbered of life in the open trenches, wet dykes in the winter, and in summer dusty sunken avenues where death struck suddenly in the glare; after the countless nights of clear stars rising to a wondrous infinity of multitude and distance above the dark bank of the parapet—Ann bent over a soap-box cradle where a child whimpered in faint misery. The room was utterly bare of any furniture save the poor substitutes of a number of packing-cases of various sizes. The little home which Jim had established, which Ann had worked so passionately to improve, was a home no longer. It was merely a squalid shelter for squalid human animals.

"IN THE REAR SEAT A YOUNGISH MAN WAS DEFENDING HIMSELF VIGOROUSLY AGAINST THE RAIN OF BLOWS SHOWERED ON HIM BY THE MOB."

Ann, on her knees by the child, looked up to the three figures in the centre of the room, her attention suddenly challenged by the clash of angry voices.

A tall man, fierce with a shock of untidy hair falling on a narrow brow, a vivid red tie overwhelming the soft collar which kept it in place, was pointing a quivering finger at her husband's breast.

"You call yourself the leader of these men," he was saying, in a rage of scorn, "and you flaunt that scrap of coloured rag—you advertise your pride that you helped the *bourgeois* to fight his war! Take it off, man—fling it down and trample on it! The red on it is the blood of your fellow-workers!"

"Aye, that's just what it is, Laurence," said the ex-soldier, with equal anger. "And I *am* proud of it. I'm proud that I did my bit for England—for England's ours, too, as well as the capitalists', and the war was our war, the war of the crowd of us—and we went out and risked our lives while you and your cowardly kind stayed at home and helped the enemy all you could. That's your patriotism! And now to hear you talk one would think England was an enemy country! I tell you it's our country as much as anybody's, and our war that we fought for it! The red on this medal ribbon is the red of the blood of the chaps that died for it, if you like—and I'm mighty proud to wear it. And, by Heaven, Laurence, while I'm the leader of these poor chaps I won't have any traitor talk—is that clear?"

"Your country!" the other laughed, bitterly. "What right have you got to a ha'porth of it?—you, who are being chucked out into the street—you, who haven't even the right to demand work and earn your bread! Bah! Militarism has rotted the soul of you!"

"It taught me to know a true man when I see him, anyway, Laurence—and you're none o' that kind! You, poisoning the minds of starving men——!"

"And who keeps 'em starving? Who prevents 'em from helping themselves in the nearest baker's shop——?"

"Now, lads—now, lads!" intervened the third man, a thick-set fellow in black coat and turned-up trousers over yellow boots. A smug self-confidence was native to his podgy countenance, was the complement of the cunning, scheming eyes. "There's no use quarrelling. What we've got to do is to 'elp each other—we working men. The Union's *bust*, Jim, an' that's the fact of it—an' if Mr. Laurence's organization 'ere can't give us a 'and—well, I don't know what'll 'appen. This last trick of 'Athaway's, chucking the whole street out o' doors, fairly puts the lid on it!"

There was a silence in the room and Jim glanced round at the haggard visage of his wife, bending, with tears on her cheeks, over the whimpering child.

"Yes, look!" said the tall man. "That's what you fought for, my lad!"

Jim did not reply. He pressed his hand to his brow as though his brain reeled. The trade union leader tried to profit by his silence.

"We're properly up against it—there's no dodging it. Mind you, Jim, I think there's a lot of reason in what Mr. Laurence says——"

Ann stood up quickly and faced her husband.

"Jim!" she said—her voice was firm though her chest heaved with weakness.—"you'll do what's right—whatever 'appens!"

Laurence spoke again.

"We're perfectly ready to help—but this is the last time of offering. You know the terms. You're responsible for a good many hundreds of starving families, Swain—they mayn't listen to you much longer, don't forget——"

He was interrupted by fierce shouts in the street below, the reiterated blasts of a motor-horn, the crash of broken glass, a whir of machinery, and yet fiercer shouts. All three rushed to the window. Below them a motor-car was stationary in the midst of a surging mob. The chauffeur lay senseless amid the *débris* of a shattered wind-screen. In the rear seat a youngish man was defending himself vigorously against the rain of blows showered on him by the mob which clambered on to the vehicle.

"My God! Captain Hathaway!" Even as Jim shouted he had turned to dash down the stairs.

He flung himself into the fierce mob as once before he had rushed at the knot of Germans with bombs poised to throw, his captain an imminent victim. Old instincts surged to supremacy—he fought his way blindly to the car in a blur of blows. A second later he had dragged a dazed man into the entrance of the house, had slammed the door.

"Come on, sir—come upstairs and sit down" Jim forgot for the moment the wretched room to which he invited him. He was living in a memory of the trench-days, where he had sometimes dreamed that his beloved captain might on some incredible occasion sit at tea with them in a nice little home and tell Ann that her husband had been a good soldier. Half-supporting him, he pushed him into the apartment, pulled a box out for him to sit on.

"Here you are, sir. Take it easy for a minute. You'll soon be all right."

Captain Hathaway put his hand to a damp forehead, looked stupidly at the blood on it, and then, still dazed, stared at his rescuer.

"What?—Swain?" He smiled faintly. "For the second time, eh?"

"Yes, sir—I'm glad to say!"

The tall man picked up his soft hat, glaring from Jim to the employer he had rescued.

"Come on, Bruxby," he said, in a voice quivering with anger. "There's nothing more for us here—the man's a d——d scab!"

Jim listened to the heavy feet of the pair of them tramping down the staircase.

Captain Hathaway looked around him, then took a deep breath and stood up.

"I'm all right again now. It's all come back to me. Swain"—he put his hand on the man's shoulder—"will you believe me when I say I quite understand—and that it's a shame, a

d——d shame! I've been away. I couldn't do anything till now." He looked at the woman by the cradle, held out his hand. "This is Mrs. Swain?" She stood staring at him, making no responsive movement. "Look here, I want to help—here"—his hand dived into his pocket, fished up a bundle of notes—"why, you're starving, woman!" He thrust them into her hand and she let them fall on the floor.

"I want work, Captain Hathaway—not charity," said Ann, shaking with temptation resisted.

The ex-officer turned to his man.

"Swain," he said, "I haven't been blind to all this—but, believe me; I couldn't do anything till now. I want to talk to you. Will you listen to me?"

It was some time later when Captain Hathaway (who had already seen his chauffeur into a police ambulance while Jim harangued the crowd into sullenness) drove his car down to the great gates of Hathaway's works. Jim Swain, the men's leader, sat by his side.

In the long board-room, with its thick Turkey carpet, its heavy mahogany furniture, its framed photographs of former directors, the controllers of Hathaway's and its linked houses sat already at the council-table. The air was heavy with cigar-smoke when Captain Hathaway entered.

"Sorry I'm late, gentlemen——no—a little accident—I'm quite all right—nothing at all serious," so he responded to the queries evoked by his cut forehead as he sat down.

His father rose, pompous, full-cheeked, settling his pince-nez with one hand, while he gathered together a little sheaf of papers with the other.

"Gentlemen," he said, "to-day I have to communicate to you officially what I think all of you know privately—a communication which (hem!) marks another epoch in the successful history of the house of Hathaway. I have transferred to my son, Captain Hathaway—who has not unsuccessfully graduated in the stern business of war (hear, hear!)—my controlling interest in all the enterprises of which hitherto I have been the head. I propose—and I believe you will second me in this—that Captain Hathaway be duly elected to the board as managing director." (It would have been difficult for the audience to have disputed this had they wished. There was a unanimous "Hear, hear!") Sir Thomas Hathaway passed a bulky envelope across to his son. "Here, Harry, I give you all the deeds of transfer, duly executed and dated as from yesterday. You are now the head of Hathaway and Company!" There was a faint sketch of a cheer from the fat old gentlemen round the table.

"Now, gentlemen," continued the retiring chief, "before I sit down, I should like to give you some account of my stewardship. I think we all of us perceived in the circumstances of the present time an opportunity to settle, once and for all, our score with Labour. That opportunity has not been neglected. All the factories controlled by us, in agreement with the other houses in the trade—which have most loyally backed our action—have been shut down. The date of their re-opening has not yet been decided upon, but I may tell you this, gentlemen, the trade union with which we have had so much trouble in the past is bankrupt. We are entitled to industrial peace on our own terms—but the terms which we have offered, and which were not ungenerous in the circumstances, after safeguarding our interests, have been stubbornly rejected by the men's leader—the man Swain. This left us no alternative but to put on the screw—and we have replied by serving notices of ejection on all those of our ex-employees who are behindhand in their rent. I think you will agree with me that in this we have the fullest justice on our side! (Hear, hear!) And now, gentlemen, I retire from my managing directorship and make way for my son, in the fullest confidence that he will maintain and extend the great and honourable traditions of this business."

Captain Hathaway stood up, his face oddly pale and set.

"Gentlemen, you have listened to my father's remarks. They represent accurately the theory of our past relationship between ourselves and our employees. (Hear, hear!) But, gentlemen, I want to bring home to you that it is a theory quite impossible to maintain at the present day! In accepting the leadership of this house, I am fully conscious of my responsibilities—responsibilities not only to you who have financial interests in the business, but to those who live by the employment we offer them and to the State which makes it possible for them to work and for ourselves to derive profit from that work. From this day, gentlemen, and for so long as I am head of this firm, our relations wit hour employees are on a different basis. The factories will re-open to-morrow—at the old trade union rates, excepting where the new rates I have offered to the men are more remunerative to them. The policy of the firm is reversed!"

Captain Hathaway, in all his experience of war, had never felt the need of all his courage so much as in making this announcement—which, to himself, sounded brutally bald.

One of the directors rose, banging nervously upon the table with his fist, and shaking with rage.

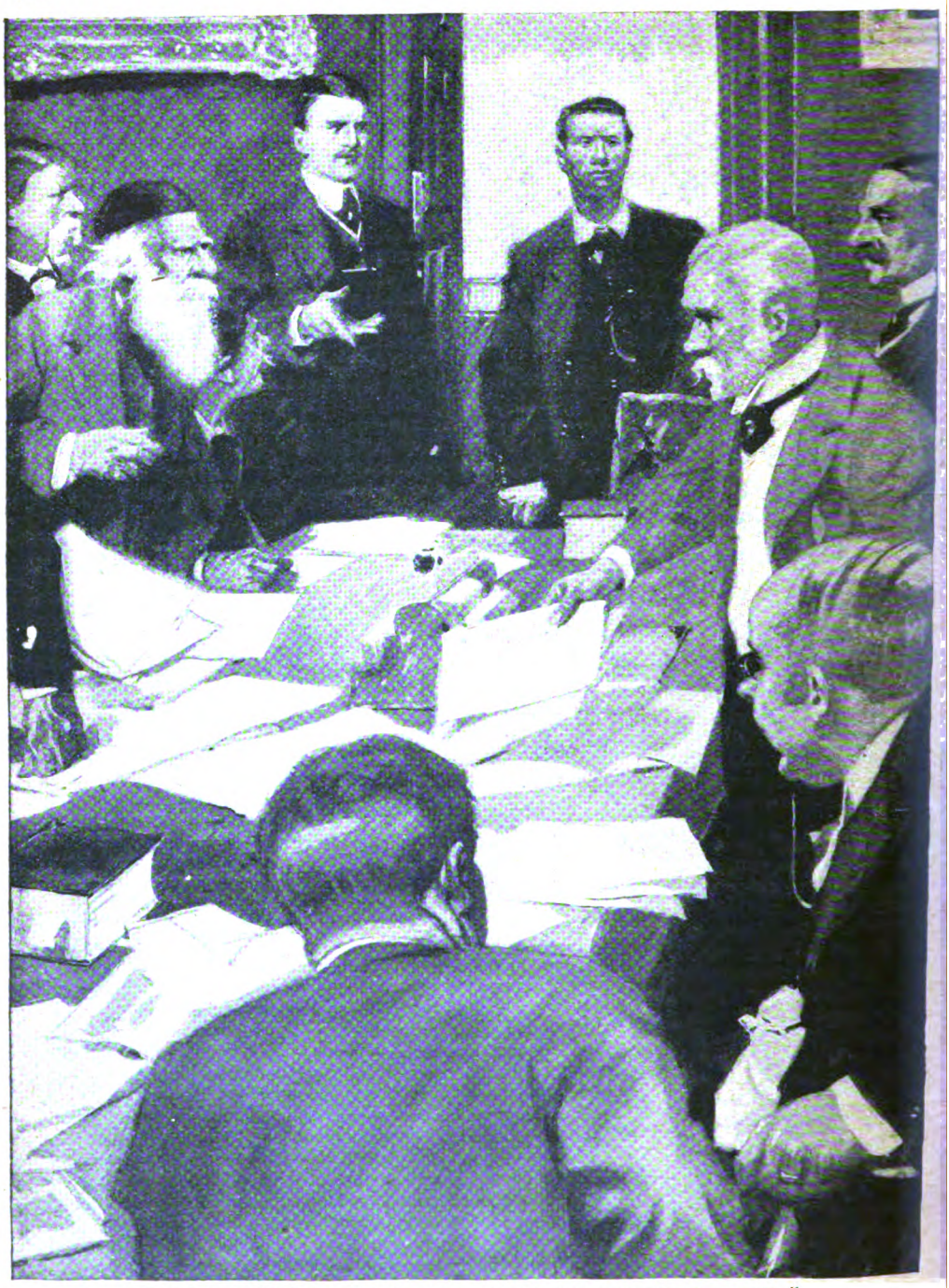
"By Heaven!" he said, "I never thought Tom Hathaway's boy would be a traitor!"

Sir Thomas Hathaway half rose and sat down again—looking as though he were going to faint.

Another of the directors stood up.

"Has our new managing director any other harmless little proposals to make?" he asked, in bitter sarcasm.

"Yes," replied Captain Hathaway. "I propose to take powers to create a new Deferred Stock which will rank for dividend after the Ordinary Stock has received eight per cent., but which will in all circumstances carry a right to vote on the board—and this stock will be



"WE'VE COME BACK, SWAIN AND I, FROM THE BORDERS OF DEATH."

vested in the representatives of our employees, chosen by them."

"It will never be agreed to by the men!" cried a voice.

"It *is* agreed to already by the men's representatives," replied the new chief, feeling the coolness of courage return to him as once when he had faced the mob of Germans.

The wealthiest of the directors, a man associated with other houses in the trade, rose in his turn.

"I warn you, Hathaway, that I shall dispose

of my interests in this business—and I'm going to fight you to the last shilling! You'll be broke in a year."

"All of us! All of us!" came a chorus of approval. "We'll all fight! This is sheer madness!"

"Fight if you will, gentlemen," said Hathaway, calmly. "It won't pay you. I haven't been idle these three months. I may tell you that I have contracts in my pocket that will keep us going for many months to come—more than a year. The whole world is shrieking for goods, and Germany is supplying them—capturing your markets while you commit suicide in trying to get the better of Labour. In these last months I have established agents all over the world—and I've got the orders! I know what the other houses have got—I know what's open to you—you *can't* fight us—but you'll be taken over by the Government if your obstinacy continues this unworthy industrial strife."

There was a silence of vague-headed, angry old men who did not quite know what to say.

"And now, gentlemen," continued Hathaway, "let me plead for a better spirit. That great mass of human beings you coldly call Labour fought for England just as I fought for England, just as thousands and thousands of our own class fought. We've been together in the trenches year in, year out, and we've learnt to know each other, not as hostile abstractions, but as living men—good men, the most of us. We learnt all sorts of things we didn't realize before the war, but most of all we learnt—and when I say we, *I mean your sons as well*—that we're all Englishmen, and that we all have to play the game and stick together—officer and man. D'you think I, who have watched over the comfort of my men, taught them, led them into danger, and seen them unafraid—who have hungered with them, thirsted with them, gloried in them for these last long years—d'you think I can coldly condemn those men and their wives and children to starvation now? D'you think I can treat them as an enemy? I can't. And the men who have been proud of us, their officers—d'you think they haven't learnt the value of leadership? They have—but not the leadership of a slave-master. In the long, bitter years of strife those men have won for themselves a freedom of soul which is the life-force of a free Empire! Class hatred! It has vanished as between officer and man! We're all Englishmen together—and we're going to work share and share alike in the new England that, share and share alike, we fought for!" He flung open the door behind him. "Here, gentlemen, is Jim Swain, the leader of your workpeople in their time of trouble. He saved my life twice: once in the trenches—and got a D.C.M. when he ought to have had the V.C.—and again to-day, when he set a seal of comradeship between the managing director and the employees of Hathaway's. Together, he and I, and those we represent, are going to make our patch of England worth the lives that were spent to save it!"

There was a hush in the room, and into that hush came the strains of a military band playing a regiment to the neighbouring railway station. It played the familiar marching tune of the old days, and a flaw of wind brought masculine voices in the uplift of the chorus.

" . . . . .

There's a silver lining
Through the dark cloud shining;
Turn the dark cloud inside out,
For the boys are home!"

"They're coming back!" cried Captain Hathaway. "Coming back in their thousands and their millions—officers and men—your sons at the head of the men they have learned to love! Comrades that can never be estranged! We're the new generation, gentlemen—the old order has gone—never to return. We've come back, Swain and I, from the borders of death, that has taught us how precious life may be."

The heads, bald and florid, of that obese elder generation turned in a community of curious interest to gaze at Swain—the man who nerved his fellows to withstand an economic pressure they had thought irresistible and was now hailed as comrade by their own young chief.

The ex-soldier took a step forward.

"I should just like to say this, sirs—we men know what it is to have good officers—and we've never let 'em down. We've come back, officers and men; and officers like Captain Hathaway will always find their men work for them as they used to fight, for officers like him make us feel the Old Country is worth working for as it was worth fighting for. We've learnt to play the game—and we'll play it so long as we have fair play. The British soldier has learnt to die rather than surrender—and the British soldier is just the British working-man."

LEST YOU FORGET!

DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

ROUND-THE-WORLD RECORDS.

By HAYDEN CHURCH.

We can now "put a girdle round the earth" in just over one month. How quickly shall we be able to do it when the space-devouring air and water craft now being utilized in war are turned to the uses of commerce and pleasure? Here are full directions for a later Phileas Fogg.

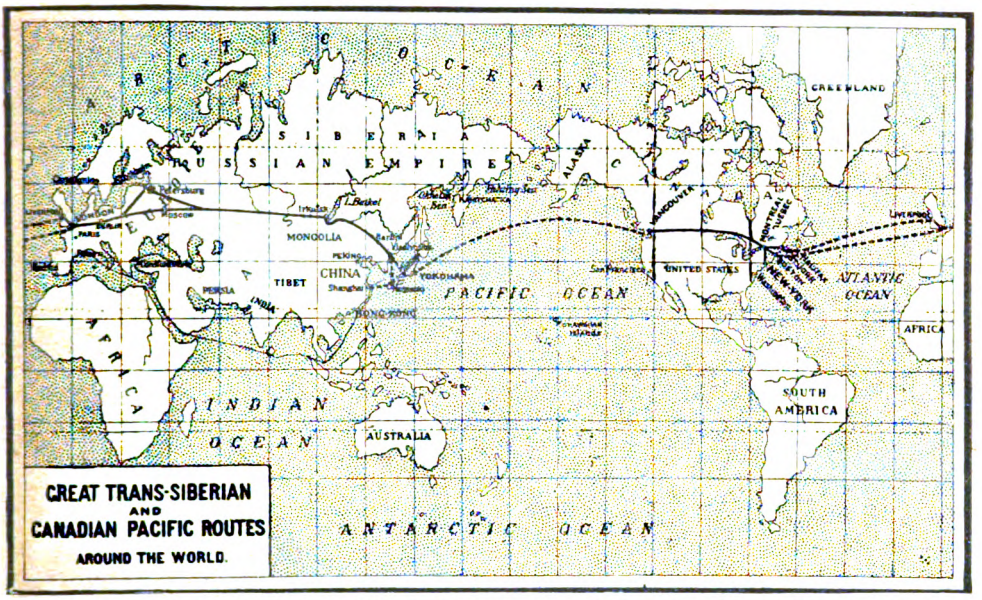
N these days of stress and strain, when most of the new novels deal with at least some phase of the world-war, more and more of us, for relaxation, turn back gratefully to the book-friends of other days. It was in this mood that the present writer recently re-read that perhaps most enthralling of all the tales of adventure mixed with science that were written by the late Jules Verne, "Around the World in Eighty Days." And what a crowd of memories, of mental pictures, and of speculations this re-reading of the story of Phileas Fogg, the impassive Englishman, and his globe-girdling tour to win a bet of twenty thousand pounds straightway conjured up!

Around the world in eighty days! What is the record *to-day?* A record well calculated to make the Gallic father of scientific fiction gasp with amazement! And what will the record be a hundred, nay, twenty years from to-day, with the world once more at peace and the space-devouring air and water craft that now are being utilized exclusively in making war devoted to the more fruitful ends of commerce and of pleasure? No doubt a meagre total of days from London back to London, or New York back to New York, that will give even greater astonishment to the amiable shade of M. Verne, provided that that shade is cognizant of mundane achievements.

But who knows? For did not Jules Verne himself foresee the rigid airship of to-day in "The Clipper of the Clouds," the submarine in "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea"—even the possibility of an excursion to another planet than this in "From the Earth to the Moon"? How, then, can one say that even the ultimate achievement of applied science will cause surprise to the spirit-incarnation of the romancer-savant who, blind at the end of his days, dictated his wonder-volumes almost to the last in his quiet home at Amiens? At Amiens, whose cathedral was for long an enticing target for the Hun, whose picturesque streets are familiar to so many British soldiers, and which is pictured on postcards in the possession of so many of our fighting-men's wives and sweethearts—cards with the name of the town carefully "deleted" in deference to the ironclad fiat of the inflexible Censor!

To-day the record for a journey round the world is thirty-five days twenty-one hours and thirty-five minutes, in comparison with the eighty days in which Phileas Fogg, according to his creator, managed to encircle the globe, in spite of such adverse circumstances as being pursued from start to finish by a detective who believed him to be a bank-robber and thus did his utmost to delay the traveller *en route* till a warrant for his arrest could arrive from England. In spite, too, of mischances that obliged Fogg to travel by elephant, by ice-yacht, by costly special trains, and in a steamer, first hired and then virtually pirated, which he burned down to its iron hull in order to provide fuel for his engines when his coal-supply ran out.

Thus far have we progressed since 1872, the year in which Jules Verne told his story as happening. Of course the building of the great Trans-Siberian Railway has accounted



BY TRAVELLING OVER THE ROUTE SHOWN IN THE ABOVE MAP IT IS POSSIBLE BY THE ORDINARY MEANS OF TRAVEL TO "PUT A GIRDLE ROUND THE EARTH" IN JUST OVER A MONTH.

for most of the difference, and cut many days from the globe-trotter's schedule. And faster steamers, quicker trains, and more perfect "connections" the world over account for the remainder of difference in the time that could be made before the war and the record set up by Phileas Fogg.

The record of thirty-five days twenty-one hours thirty-five minutes, as it stands at present for a round-the-world trip, was established in 1913, by Mr. John Henry Mears, who travelled as a representative of the New York *Evening Sun*, the journalistic child of the famous New York newspaper, renowned always for its brilliance, of which Charles A. Dana was for so many years the editor, and the gifted graduates from whose staff include the late Richard Harding Davis. Mr. Mears attempted, successfully, to break the previous record of thirty-nine days nineteen hours for a globe-girdling trip which had been set up two years before by M. André Jaeger-Schmidt, who, in spite of his German-sounding name, was a Frenchman, and who scampered from Paris around the world and back again on behalf of the Paris journal *Excelsior*. M. Jaeger-Schmidt in his turn set out to halve the mythical record of Jules Verne's hero, and also to beat one that had been set up (though without official attestation) by Lieutenant-Colonel Burnley-Campbell, an English traveller, in 1907.

All three of these record-makers travelled by the Trans-Siberian Railway. In considering their comparative performances, however, we must all but eliminate the gallant British colonel, since he did not announce the record that he had set up until the termination of his tour, and then only by means of a letter to the *Times*. His performance, as a matter of fact, attracted little, if any, interest; in fact, it did not escape considerable depreciation on the part of experts.

On the other hand, needless to say, the performances of both the French and the American journalist — the latter's exploit must be fresh in everybody's mind—were exceptionally well advertised, and in each case, as a whimsical music-hall performer has it, "the excitement was intense." M. Jaeger-Schmidt, who left Paris on July 17th, 1911, at 1.15 p.m. and arrived back in the French capital at 9 a.m. on August 26th, travelled by the now almost invariable Moscow - Harbin - Vladivostock - Yokohama route, and met with comparatively no mishaps.

The principal one that he did sustain consisted in the fact that the *Empress of Japan*, by which he sailed from Yokohama, though she gained fourteen hours upon her ordinary speed, arrived at Vancouver just four hours too late to catch the transcontinental train. This, however, meant only a brief delay, and the French journalist was soon racing across the prairies toward Montreal. Only when he reached that city, on what may be described

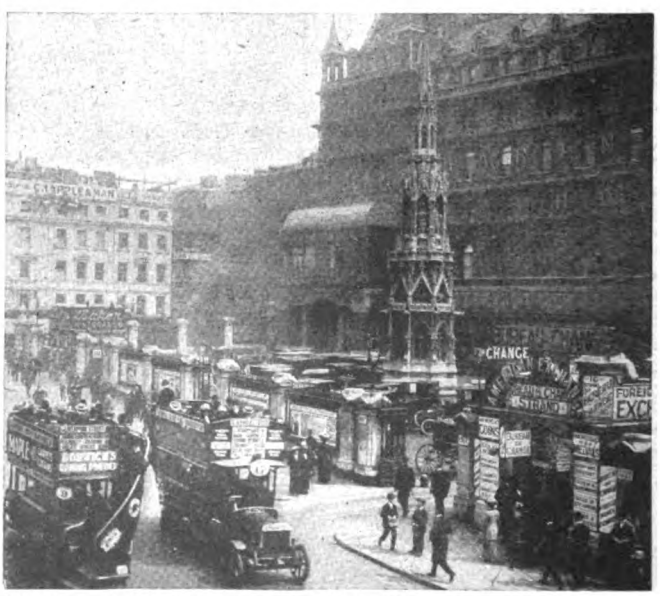
as the penultimate lap of his globe-girdling rush, did he learn of a development which threatened to "dish" him irremediably. It had been his original intention to sail from Montreal direct for Liverpool, but between the time of his departure and his arrival in Montreal the great English railway strike of that year had started, and the train-service of this country was "tied up."

In the interim, having left Paris on July 17th, this Gallic globe-trotter had reached Moscow on the 20th, Omsk on the 22nd, Irkutsk on the 25th, Harbin on the 28th, Vladivostock on the 29th, and Yokohama on the 31st. He was in Vancouver on August 12th, and he reached Montreal on the 17th, his journey thus far having occupied a month.

M. Jaeger-Schmidt had planned to sail for Liverpool on the Allan Line steamer *Victorian*, which would have landed him in Liverpool on Friday afternoon, but what the "strike" situation might then be no man could tell. There was every chance that he might find himself stranded at Liverpool, or at the mercy of the vagaries of a motor-car, which on such a long journey might cost him the race. Besides, it was doubtful if he would be able to cross the English Channel should the strike keep up—unless, indeed, he took an aeroplane to France, which again would involve much risk. In this exigency M. Jaeger-Schmidt resolved to alter his itinerary and to travel *viâ* New York to Cherbourg by the White Star Line steamer *Olympic*. The officials of the line were able to assure him that he would arrive in Cherbourg some time between eleven o'clock and midnight on August 25th, and would thus have leeway of full thirteen hours to enable him to reach Paris before 1.15 p.m. on August 26th, when the forty-day period would have elapsed.

As a matter of fact they were better than their word. The captain of the *Olympic* "crowded" that steamer, with the result that Jaeger-Schmidt arrived several hours earlier than had been promised, and could have been in Paris correspondingly sooner had he not deliberately stopped to partake of a banquet in his honour which his admiring French *confrères* had arranged for him at Cherbourg. At its conclusion he jumped into a high-powered motor-car and was in Paris, where he met with an enthusiastic reception, and at the offices of his newspaper, with something like an hour to spare. He had covered nineteen thousand five hundred miles, his average travel being four hundred and eighty miles a day—that is, about twenty miles an hour! No wonder that he was more or less a physical wreck and that he almost immediately left Paris for the mountains, there to recuperate from the fatigues and nerve-strain of his journey. What approximates to physical exhaustion is the penalty which the record-making globe-girdler pays for his success. Mr. Mears, who beat the Frenchman's record by three days, lost twenty pounds in weight while on the trip!

At the last moment before treading the soil of France again, by the way, M. Jaeger-Schmidt learned something new about the ingenuity of Americans. One of his fellow-passengers on the *Olympic* approached him and told him he also was a newspaper correspondent. He asked Jaeger-Schmidt to permit him to accompany him to shore in the auto-boat which was waiting for the globe-circler, the other passengers not being allowed to land before morning.

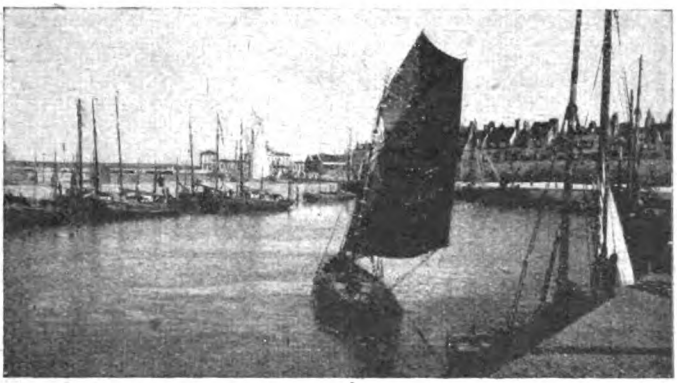


CHARING CROSS STATION—THE STARTING-POINT FOR THE ROUND-THE-WORLD TRIP.
Photo. by Photochrom Co.

The Frenchman warmly greeted his supposed *confrère* and placed the auto-boat at his disposal. Once the American was on land he

thanked Jaeger-Schmidt warmly and confessed that he was really a business man! The American added that he wished urgently to join his wife, who was in Europe, and could not endure a twelve-hours' delay. He had telegraphed ahead for a motor-car, which was awaiting him, and he came to Paris following closely the globe-trotting reporter. When Jaeger-Schmidt was asked if the name of the man who had fooled him, he said:—

"No; it was a good joke. The American told me his name, but asked me not to reveal it; and I don't intend to."



CALAIS, WHICH IS REACHED THREE HOURS AND FIFTY MINUTES AFTER LEAVING LONDON.
Photo. by Photochrom Co.

This episode, as a matter of fact, somewhat recalls the one in "Around the World in Eighty Days," when Fix, the detective who was following Phileas Fogg with the intention of arresting him, accepted the Englishman's hospitality on the small vessel which Fogg had chartered to take him from Hong-Kong to Shanghai.

Mr. John Henry Mears, of the New York *Evening Sun*, who beat to smithereens the record of his French *confrère*, had particular reason to be proud of his feat, for not only did he travel farther and faster than the Frenchman, but, unlike Jaeger-Schmidt, he encountered serious obstacles, one at least of which would have hopelessly ruined his achievement had he not risen to the occasion with the resource and enterprise (coupled with "nerve") which we have learned to expect from our American cousins. Beating Jaeger-Schmidt's record by three days twenty-two hours and seven minutes, Mr. Mears logged twenty-one thousand and sixty-six miles in comparison with Jaeger-Schmidt's nineteen thousand five hundred, and he travelled at the rate of five hundred and eighty-seven miles a day, in contrast with the Frenchman's four hundred and eighty. In the course of his trip he slept only once at an hotel, and then only for two hours—this in London.

Mears left New York by the *Mauretania*, the fastest ship afloat, on July 2nd, 1913, and arrived in London on the 7th. Instead of taking the ordinary route by way of Belgium to Moscow to catch the Trans-Siberian express, the American went from London to Paris (it is said to see Jaeger-Schmidt). Then he went to Petrograd by way of Berlin, and thence to Harbin, an alteration of the best route which cost him a day. It was while crossing Siberia that he met with his first and chiefest mishap. This came in the shape of a wash-out on the line near Ekaterinburg, which delayed him for eighteen hours. How were these to be made up? Mears's way was by bribing the engine-driver of the train, through, it is said, one of the attendants of the sleeping-car in which he was travelling.

The American is said to have promised the head engine-driver ten roubles (twenty shillings) for every half-hour that he made up, and the driver, willing enough to earn this reward, cracked on all speed, and made up in this way precisely nine hours. Unfortunately for the American, however, the chief official of the train and some of the passengers became alarmed at the pace to which the train was being forced. Mears's guilt being revealed, he was hauled over the coals pretty severely, and was within an ace of being arrested, but eventually was allowed to proceed to Harbin, the junction of the Chinese Eastern Railway, whence he arrived—nine hours late!

This almost made him despair, as he knew that he could not arrive in Vladivostock in time to catch the steamer for Japan which would enable him to make connection with the Canadian Pacific mail steamer from Yokohama to Victoria, B.C.; and his chances of establishing a record appeared few.

For the successful performance of his globe-girdling feat, as it turned out, Mr. Mears had entirely to thank the Japanese railway officials, who not only advised him to travel from Harbin through Korea to Fusan, on the Korean coast, and thence by steamer to Shamonoseki (Japan), continuing by rail to Yokohama, but provided him with what amounted to special trains and held up the

Straits steamer at Kusan for three hours. This enabled the American, who arrived at Harbin on July 21st, to reach Yokohama on the 24th, in time to catch the *Empress of Russia*, which, had he missed, would have cost him his victory.

Fate, however, had another mishap in store for the American journalist, exactly as she had so many up her sleeve with purpose to defeat Jules Verne's romantic hero, Phileas Fogg. The mishap took the shape of a *real* fog! Arriving outside Victoria, British Columbia, on August 2nd, Mears took the yacht *Maud F.* off Quarantine, being allowed to pass the Customs without inspection. Owing to the dense fog which then prevailed the yacht had been cruising about all night looking for the liner, which could not be sighted. Mears appears to have spent the night in the ship's wireless house getting messages about the fog from the Canadian Weather Bureau. The fog clearing, he went with the *Maud F.* toward Seattle, U.S.A., but the speed at which this vessel was able to drive through the waters of the Sound was not sufficient to enable the journalist to reach his destination in time to catch the fast express train from that city to St. Paul, according to his plan. In this exigency the American displayed ingenuity and pluck worthy of Verne's hero himself.

What he did when fifteen miles from Seattle was to transfer from the yacht to a hydro-aeroplane piloted by a flyer named Christopherson. The change from the yacht to the hydro-aeroplane was very risky, but the last fifteen miles was made at the rate of sixty miles per hour. After arriving at Seattle Mears learned that the last man Christopherson had taken flying over Puget Sound was then at the bottom of the Sound! At least half a day must have been saved by travelling from Victoria to Seattle in this way instead of waiting for the ordinary connections.

Thus he managed to catch the North Coast Limited train to St. Paul, whence he travelled to New York by way of Chicago. He gained two days in crossing the Pacific and further time through crossing the American continent by way of the United States instead of Canada. Leaving Seattle on August 2nd, he was in New York on the 6th at 10.18 p.m., thus completing his circuit of the universe in the time already mentioned — thirty-five days twenty-one hours and thirty-five minutes.

Thus the record for globe-girdling remains, and will remain until peace comes again. But at this point the question must be raised: just what *is* "going around the world"? To do so means simply to start out at one point, travel in one direction, and get back to the same point. These later globe-girdlers travel throughout the northern latitudes, never touching a tropical country as did Jules Verne's hero, who travelled by Brindisi and Port Said, and who went across India partly by railway and partly in the howdah of an elephant! The man who takes the trouble to walk around the Royal Exchange has just as much right to say that he has travelled around London. From a geographical standpoint, in fact, it may be said that the globe-encirclers of to-day have done little more than travel round the North Pole. And *were* one at the North Pole he might run around in a circle and then declare that he had been round the world in fifteen seconds!

It is beyond argument that no simple novel ever has brought about such human competition as that of Jules Verne. When he wrote it he invested his hero with all the attributes of a Verne hero—a man who could do marvellous things and who with almost inhuman *sang-froid* could pursue an objective point to an ultimate and successful conclusion. Verne never dreamed, when he wrote of the fictitious Phileas Fogg, that any person would attempt to emulate this record. But less than a quarter of a century after the publication of "Around the World in Eighty Days" somebody did emulate—and beat — Fogg's supposed achievement, and this someone was a woman, the famous "Nellie Bly," of the New York *World*. Her race around the world was the

LIÈGE, WHICH IS LEFT SOME SIX HOURS LATER FOR THE TRAIN JOURNEY ACROSS EUROPE.
Photo. by E.N.A.

WARSAW, WHERE CARRIAGES ARE CHANGED IN THE LONG TRANS-EUROPEAN TRIP.
Photo. by Underwood & Underwood.

first real one, at all events, to which any special publicity was given, and no globe-girdling journey that has succeeded it has awakened anything like the same world-wide interest. She succeeded in slicing eight days off the time that Jules Verne gave Phileas Fogg, and would have done considerably better than that had it not been for quite trivial mischances, which cost her many days.

"Nellie Bly's" name in real life was Elizabeth Cochrane, and she is still living as the widow of Mr. Robert Seaman. "Nellie Bly" was among those present at a dinner given to M. Jaeger-Schmidt during the few hours he spent in New York in August, 1911, and she was in Petrograd only a few months ago. As a representative of the New York *World*, on whose staff she was a reporter, "Nellie Bly" started out on her record-breaking trip on November 14th, 1889, and finished it on January 25th, 1890. And when Jules Verne heard that the New York newspaper proposed seriously to send a woman to make a better showing than his hero, Phileas Fogg, the aged novelist evinced the most active interest in the affair.

The one departure that "Nellie Bly" made from her schedule was that which took her to make a call upon Jules Verne at his home at Amiens. And when she left him she carried with her the best wishes of the man who had inspired her attempt. In his heart Verne believed that his hero's record could not be beaten, though he admitted that progress had been made in the transportation facilities in the years that had intervened. But he cheered on "Nellie Bly," and at every opportune moment sent her once more his best wishes. When her effort was finished on January 25th, 1890, the first to wire congratulations was Verne, and to the New York *World* he sent most laudatory comments on its enterprise. Phileas Fogg and "Nellie Bly" travelled, the one in imagination, the other in fact, almost identically the same route. The one difference lay in Fogg's traverse of Hindustan, partly by rail, partly on elephant. Miss Cochrane took the all-sea route. So far as possible, in fact, she circumnavigated the globe, the only land-traverses of any extent being that from Paris to Brindisi, where she caught the P. and O. steamer, and that from San Francisco to New York. At the Equator the circumference of the earth is about twenty-five thousand miles, but when one starts to make a sea-trip circle, such as "Nellie Bly's," several thousand more miles must be added. In fact, it was estimated that Miss Bly travelled about thirty thousand miles in her seventy-two days, or at the rate of nearly four hundred and twenty miles a day, or between seventeen and eighteen miles an hour.

Her journey occupied exactly seventy-two days and six hours. She left New York on November 14th, travelling on the steamer *Victoria*, and arrived at Southampton on November 22nd. From London she left for Amiens, *viâ* Boulogne, to visit M. Verne, and then rushed on to Brindisi. She lost several days at Colombo, Hong-Kong, and Yokohama. These delays, amounting to fourteen days, were unavoidable owing to the lack of transportation facilities. Deducting these, "Nellie Bly" would have made the trip in fifty-eight days.

Every reader of "Around the World in Eighty Days" will recall the tense situation depicted by Jules Verne as taking place in the Reform Club of London, of which Fogg was a member, and with other members of which he wagered twenty thousand pounds that he could put a girdle round the world in eighty days. He was due back, to win his bet, at eight-forty-five on the evening of December 21st, and but a second before the time had elapsed, when his fellow-members were already figuring on how to cash his cheque, he stepped within the portals of the club,

accompanied by his ever-faithful servitor, Passepartout. Fogg had many adventures, hair-raising and romantic. Not only was he followed by a detective who believed him to be connected with a Bank of England robbery, but he became infatuated with and married a woman whom he had saved from death while on his elephant-jaunt in India.

But "Nellie Bly's" trip was a comparatively uneventful one. Troubles she had, of course, with Customs officers, with steamship agents, with railroad people, and with all the world who could not understand how it could be that a woman should be travelling alone at such a breakneck rate, almost without baggage, from country to country. To many of the Government officials on the way she was a suspicious person, someone who presumably had dark and sinister designs on the Government itself!

We expect a woman to be well provided with luggage, but "Nellie Bly" travelled even "lighter" than Jaeger-Schmidt, for she was accompanied by only one handbag to his two. Her almost invariable costume throughout was a black-and-white check "tailor-made" costume, surmounted by a pith helmet, and in this rough-and-ready attire she was pictured in periodicals the world over. Her trip demonstrated, among other things, the comparative cheapness of such a journey, provided one kept always moving forward. Phileas Fogg's trip, Verne figured out, cost him nineteen thousand pounds, leaving a bare thousand pounds margin in the amount of the bet that he had made. But "Nellie Bly's" trip hardly cost a tenth of this amount, since she did not undertake any of the various special (and expensive) modes of travel that Verne permitted his hero.

In 1901 the Trans-Siberian Railway was practically completed, and immediately there began attempts to set up round-the-world records by the new route. The first of these to attract any special attention was that of Mr. Henry Frederick, an American editor, who accomplished the journey in fifty-four days seven hours and twenty minutes. He sailed in the *Deutschland* on July 2nd, 1903, crossed Siberia by rail, and was back in New York on August 27th. At Yokohama, however, he missed the Trans-Pacific steamer by ten hours, which cost him seven days, as he had to take a slower vessel.

It was four years later, or in July, 1907, that Colonel H. Burnley-Campbell announced in the *Times* that he had just accomplished a journey around the world in forty days nineteen and a half hours, and inquired if this was a record. It probably was for a man, but the gallant Colonel must have been somewhat crestfallen to learn, a few days later, that an even speedier globe-girdling trip had been made—by an ordinary postcard—as long before as 1891!

That this was the case was vouched for by Dr. W. W. Stocker, a well-known physician of Willesden Green, who stated that he had in his possession a postcard which took only forty days fifteen hours from the time it was posted in London to the time it was delivered back at his house in Brondesbury. "The card," wrote Dr. Stocker, "was posted at 5 p.m. in Brondesbury on September 17th, 1891, addressed to the postmaster at Hong-Kong, who was asked to forward it immediately back to England *viâ* Suez. It travelled to Hong-Kong *viâ* Canada and the Canadian Pacific steamer. It arrived at my house at 8.30 a.m. on October 28th, 1891. It seems strange," added Dr. Stocker, "that the rate of travel round the world does not seem to have increased materially during the last fifteen years. I believe this journey to have been exceptionally rapid, owing to the steamer on that occasion going direct to Vancouver from Hong-Kong. It probably constitutes a record."

ON THE THIRD DAY OF THE TRIP MOSCOW IS REACHED, THE STEPPING-OFF PLACE FOR THE JOURNEY ACROSS SIBERIA.
Photo. by Photochrom Co.

As a commentary on the round-the-world tour of André Jaeger-Schmidt, Mr. Cecil Grey wrote to the London Press that he recently (1911) had duplicated Phileas Fogg and

"Nellie Bly's" trip—*i.e.*, *viâ* Brindisi, Port Said, Shanghai, and Yokohama—in fifty-five days, a record which he declared could not be broken with ordinary means of transportation.

But for the northerly route round the world the record of thirty-five days odd set up by Mr. John Henry Mears stands as best, and, in the opinion of Messrs. Thos. Cook and Son, who know more about the subject than probably anybody else in the world, will continue to stand so long as the means of transportation remain as they exist to-day, or as they did exist before the world was plunged into war.

VLADIVOSTOCK, AFTER MANY DAYS' MONOTONY ON THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY, IS ARRIVED AT ON THE THIRTEENTH DAY.
Photo. by E.N.A.

"It is doubtful," said a member of the staff of Cook's, "if Mr. Mears's feat even can be frequently duplicated, and this principally because it is so rare that the sailing of the *Mauretania*, the speediest ship now afloat, can be made to synchronize so exactly within the same space of time with that of the Canadian Pacific express steamers, the *Empress of Russia* and the *Empress of Asia*, as was contrived by Mr. Mears, or whoever planned his trip. He must have foreseen this synchronization very far ahead, for it was probably the only time in the year 1913 that it occurred, and one might go for two years at a time and yet not get this steamer-connection to fit. One must consider, too, the many chances of delays—delays which the American just managed to surmount. These include delays to the Atlantic steamer through fog, and in the Irish Sea and the English Channel through either fog or bad weather, or a combination of both.

"One should time one's arrival in England, too, so as to catch the London to Vladivostock service, which leaves every Monday morning, and Moscow every Wednesday evening (in normal times, that is). To show the chances of delay in this respect, I may recall that two American boys who were sent round the world by the New York *American* some years ago were three hours late at Plymouth. As a consequence they missed the nine o'clock Dover boat-train, and their projected thirty-minutes' stay in London had to be extended to a week.

"Then you must consider the long journey across Siberia, a distance of over five thousand miles, from Moscow to Vladivostock. Possible wash-outs and breakdowns must be taken into account. And Russian engineers are not like either their British or their American *confrères*. They may take an entire day to repair damage that would take a British or an American railroadman a few hours. Timing one's arrival in Japan so as to catch one of the fast C.P. steamers is also one of the important matters. The crossing from Vladivostock to Tsuruga by sea alone occupies forty hours, with the chance of delay through bad weather. No, if we consider the facilities as they exist in normal times, it is virtually impossible to reduce the record of thirty-five days."

"Then the only way to reduce the time is to increase the speed of trains and steamers?"

"Exactly, or to employ other than the ordinary means of transportation, such as aeroplanes. Some of our flyers at the Front, of course, can accomplish a speed of a hundred and sixty miles an hour. At that rate one could cross Europe and Asiatic Russia in from two to three days instead of thirteen days, the best possible speed by rail at present. So far as the Trans-Siberian Railway is concerned, the speed might well be largely increased. The maximum rate at which trains travel over this line is something like thirty miles an hour, as compared with the sixty set up by British and American railways. In Anglo-Saxon hands no doubt a couple of days would be knocked off the journey across Siberia. But this would mean changing the gauge of the line."

So "round the world in thirty-five days" must remain our phrase for the present. And just how do we thus encircle the earth? We leave London from Charing Cross at 9 a.m. and arrive at Dover at eleven-five. Calais

is reached at twelve-fifty—a triumphant Calais, which the German War Lord, for all the efforts of his field-grey "cannon-fodder," never succeeded in reaching. And thus to Liège—historic little Belgian town that held back the Hunnish onrush until France and Britain were at least able to put up a show of successful resistance, and that only surrendered when its famous citadel, supposedly impregnable, had been blown to bits by the terrible "Jack Johnsons" of the Kaiser.

At Liège, at 7.13 p.m., we take the Nord Express for Moscow, changing carriages at Warsaw, and arrive at the city of the Kremlin at 8.25 p.m. on the third day of our journey. Here we dine, then drive to the Koursk Station, from which we leave Moscow at 11.30 p.m. in the train in which we are to pass nine or fewer weary days, surveying from the window a dull landscape which seldom varies. In Siberia, everywhere one looks are the low slopes of steppes, which might well be called the desert of Asiatic Russia. Cultivation there is on but a small and meagre scale, just enough to prevent the human machine from collapse.

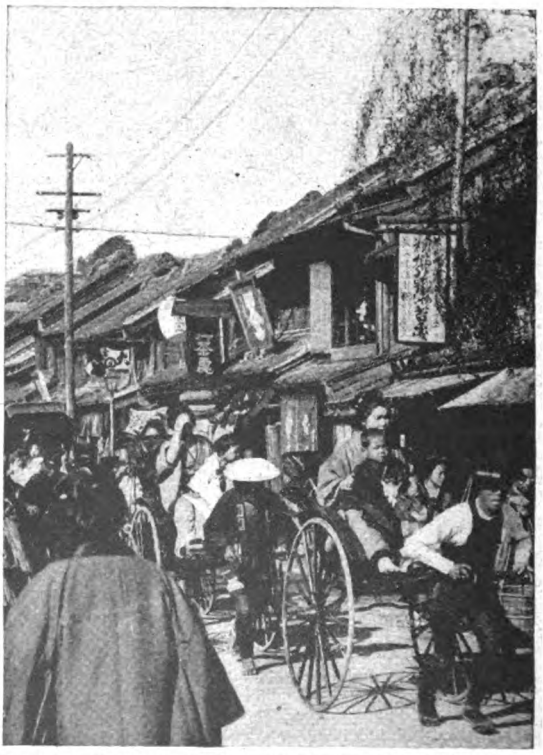
On our ninth day we are at Irkutsk, on our eleventh we arrive at Manchuria, on our twelfth we reach Harbin, and so *viâ* Pogranichnaya to Vladivostock, where we arrive at 7.21 a.m. on our thirteenth day, leaving by steamer at 1 p.m. for Tsuruga (in Japan), which we make at 5 a.m. on our fifteenth. Of fairy-like Japan we would willingly see much, but actually visualise little because of our hurry. We eventually reach Yokohama, our seaport, at 7.49 p.m. of this same day.

On the following one, our sixteenth day, we catch either the *Empress of Russia* or the *Empress of Asia*, and it is ho! across the Pacific. Nine days we are on shipboard, arriving at Vancouver on our twenty-fifth day. Here we choose the Canadian Trans-Continental route, because it involves one change only (whereas on the American one we must make at least two), and arrive in New York, by way of Montreal, on our thirtieth day. Perhaps, however, we elect to take the United States railways, and, if we do, we may have a little experience which is both amusing and instructive to British travellers.

From Chicago to New York the standard time is roughly twenty-eight hours. We, however, shall travel by a Limited train between the two great cities of America, which makes the journey some nine hours quicker. For this excess of speed we are charged nine dollars (roughly one pound sixteen shillings), but if, through any mischance, this express train be late, we shall have one dollar returned to us by the railway company for every hour that we are behind our schedule!

When we have left New York we are, of course, on the last lap of our globe-girdling adventure. We have taken a fast Cunarder (perhaps it will be a new *Lusitania!*), which lands us at Liverpool on our thirty-fifth day, London, our starting place, being now a matter of some hours. We shall not be clapped into jail (we hope), as was Phileas Fogg, and have to charter a "special" as a consequence, nor shall we be as much in haste on reaching London as was he, when, in the cab journey to the Reform Club, he ran over two dogs and collided with five carriages! Yet here we are on our thirty-fifth day, and have won our bet, if we made one.

In 1904 the Russian Minister of Railroads issued a



LEAVING VLADIVOSTOCK, A SHORT VOYAGE BY STEAMER BRINGS THE TRAVELLER TO YOKOHAMA, WHICH HE LEAVES FOR THE LONG TRIP ACROSS THE PACIFIC.
Photo by Underwood & Underwood.

chedule of possibilities when the Trans-Siberian Railway had completed its plans, by which the world tour might be accomplished in thirty-three days. The steps in this journey were as follows:—

Petrograd to Vladivostock ..	10 days.
Vladivostock to New York ..	14½ days.
New York to Bremen	7 days.
Bremen to Petrograd	1½ days.
Total	33 days.

At present, however, this plan remains a possibility. As for Jules Verne's route around the world, Messrs. Cook give, as a minimum for its accomplishment, sixty days, i.e., nearly nine weeks, in spite of the fact that Mr. Cecil Grey claims to have done it in fifty-five. Mr. Grey gave the cost of his trip as one hundred and eighty pounds, and this allowing sixty pounds for pocket-money. Mr. Mears's record-breaking trip in the northern latitudes cost at least one hundred and sixty pounds, and would have cost more but for the courtesy of the Japanese officials in providing him with a special train through Korea after he had been obliged to alter his itinerary.

Messrs. Cook mention the same figure, one hundred and sixty pounds, as the cost in round figures of the quickest possible trip around the world.

But at what speed shall we dash around the universe a few years hence? By that time the aeroplane doubtless will be serving commercial ends in a high state of perfection,

NEW YORK, REACHED ON THE THIRTIETH DAY AFTER LEAVING LONDON.
From a Photograph.

monster machines being able to transport—how many one can only conjecture. Airships of a type approximating to the Zeppelin will almost certainly be making the Transatlantic, and perhaps the Trans-Pacific, flight; in fact, we know that the former is Germany's plan. The "commercial submarine" is already in being, and plans to transport our food to us from the United States in under-sea vessels six or ten times the size of the *Deutschland* have already been announced by the inventor of the submarine as used to-day—namely, Mr. Simon Lake, the American engineer. Railways and steamships will be speeded up. In future there will be no more intercourse between passengers on a liner than there is now between those on the boat-train from London to Dover. Each traveller will take his corner seat (if he can get one), close his misanthropic eyes, and only wake up at the end of his journey. Romance, in fact, will be driven from travel, and no one, like Phileas Fogg, will pick up a bride on the way!

What was Puck's boast? "I'll put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes."

Mayhap, in our own time, it will be possible to run that sprite close. But one hopes not!

PHILEAS FOGG, THE HERO OF JULES VERNE'S "AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS," ARRIVING IN LONDON TO WIN HIS BET OF TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS.
From an early French edition.

WAR-WORKERS.

By MAY EDGINTON.

Illustrated by Treyer Evans.

"AND now," said Mrs. Brown-Perkins, "to open the parcel so kindly sent to us from my friend Lady Tubbs!"

Lightly as Mrs. Brown-Perkins spoke, there was a thrill in her voice. It was like a *tremolo* straying by accident into a trumpet-call. As the other ladies of the Burtonbury War Relief Fund Committee crowded round her with appropriate curiosity her firm hand shook a little.

"Dear Lady Tubbs!" said she; "so ever thoughtful, so always kind! Amid all her activities in the great world she does not forget little me in my small sphere down here. Scissors—or a penknife, I think."

One being handed to her by Miss Caroline Vestal and the other by Miss Virginia Crombie—the two leading unmarried lady residents of Burtonbury—the president of the War Relief Fund Committee cut the string and disclosed the contents.

During the subsequent shock of horror, preceding a chill silence, Mrs. Brown-Perkins essayed an unsuccessful smile.

"These are, no doubt, from Lady Tubbs's own wardrobe," said Mrs. Tombs, in a cold voice.

"I had gathered from you, dear Mrs. Perkins," remarked Mrs. Baker, "an impression of *quite* a different type of woman."

Other ladies present voicing similar thoughts, Mrs. Brown-Perkins, murmuring something about an explanation, sought for and found a folded note.

"My dear Mrs. Brown-Perkins," she read, "I send you a little consignment which I hope you will be able to sell for the good of your cause. They were sent to me by a

prominent actress, lately widowed, who, while, of course, wearing the usual black outwardly, feels that she must at least be mauve throughout underneath. It is a feeling which does her credit, I think. The garments appear to me to be of considerable value and should be easily disposed of."

"I suppose," said Mrs. Tombs, stretching out a finger and thumb, "that this is *not* a—a dress?"

"It is certainly not," Miss Vestal replied, laying both hands upon it with a touch of avidity.

"And what is this?" Miss Crombie asked.

"And this?" said Mrs. Baker.

"And this?"

"And these?"

As each lady sat with a butterfly garment spread upon her knee, and a look of horror and disapprobation petrified upon her face, a well-known silhouette passed by the windows of the parish meeting-room, in the direction of the door.

Every lady, starting, exclaimed, with unanimous inflection, "Professor Ruby!"

"That saintly man!" said Mrs. Baker, crumpling an offensive nightgown into a ball and dashing it into the box again. "Do not let him catch even a glimpse of these things!"

"With his wonderful standard of womanhood——" began Miss Vestal, tremulously, flinging away a lapful.

"True," said Mrs. Brown-Perkins, "most true. I would not offend the dear Professor's fastidiousness for the world. As you observe, dearest Miss Vestal, his standard is the highest one. It is set in the clouds. What he would think of pink and yellow——"

"Though, being a bachelor, he would not know what they are," said Miss Crombie, bringing relief.

"Neither would my husband know, my dear, though we have been married for twenty-five years," said Mrs. Baker. "If he were even to see me looking at underclothes like that, he would say to me, 'Bessie,' he would say——"

"Put the lid on quickly!" exclaimed Mrs. Tombs, in a voice of authority, as there entered the parish room the wonderful man who, though not of the cloth itself, yet, by reason of his high friendship with Burtonbury's absent rector—now C.F.—had taken upon himself all parish duties possible to one

"A WELL-KNOWN SILHOUETTE PASSED BY THE WINDOWS OF THE PARISH MEETING-ROOM, IN THE DIRECTION OF THE DOOR."

of the laity, and even closely assimilated the manner and habits of his revered associate.

"Good afternoon, ladies," said he, laughing readily. "What have we here? What a really fine—what a magnificent collection for the jumble sale! What kind friend sent us that splendid centre-piece for a table? Really! Really! it is very little broken, too. Wonderful! wonderful! I suspect Mrs. Brown-Perkins has had a strong hand in this! And I'm sure she has had able lieutenants in Mrs. Baker and Mrs. Tombs, and I expect that Mrs. Hargraves and Mrs. Slater are conspiring brilliantly as usual in good works; while as for Miss Vestal and Miss Crombie, dear Mrs. Brown-Perkins, can you not persuade these indefatigable ladies to take a little rest? War is war, of course. We all know that, alas! Aha! aha! aha! I feel perfectly certain—a little *bird* told me—that we are going to have a fine day."

"Ever the optimist!" murmured Miss Crombie, with upturned eyes, praising the ascetic and great scholar.

"You always bring cheer," said Miss Vestal, casting down her lashes.

Mrs. Baker rose from her seat and, standing with her back against the box on the table, formed an ample screen.

"Aha! aha!" said the Professor, laughing after the most favoured rectorial manner. "I must see the whole collection. What have we in this box?"

"It is only something for sale," replied Mrs. Baker, while the other ladies clustered round, intent on saving their most distinguished neighbour's finer feelings.

"Ha! ha! ha!" said Professor Ruby, laughing, "something for sale! Let me be your first bidder."

A mingled "Oh!" went up, and Miss Crombie with upturned eyes exclaimed, "You are always generous, but——" while Mrs. Brown-Perkins issued an explanation discreetly.

"It is merely apparel, dear Professor Ruby."

"Indeed!" said the Professor, becoming extremely grave. "In-deed! How very, very kind of someone to send us some apparel! Well, well. This is splendid."

"We ordered three dozen bottles for the War Time Fruit-Bottling Club," said Mrs. Tombs, turning the conversation with a nimble wit.

"Really! really!" cried the Professor, laughing again in safety. "Three dozen! Ha! ha! ha! I must be getting home or I shall be late for tea." Continuing to laugh until he was out of the parish room, he then ceased, and walked quite naturally down the street.

"I didn't know where to look," said Miss Vestal, with a girlish shyness, the retention of which did credit to the pertinacity of her character.

"We must sell these extraordinary and deplorable clothes outside Burtonbury," said Mrs. Brown-Perkins, clasping Lady Tubbs's letter still in her hand. "I shall send them to a London wardrobe-dealer, a Mrs. Tizza, in Petticoat Lane, and they will be out of our hands. I will pack them up and send them off to-night."

Amid the congratulations of the other matrons on so satisfactory a solution, Miss Vestal and Miss Crombie took their departure.

The figure of the Professor was proceeding distantly down the High Street. He was lifting his hat and laughing at frequent intervals.

"How popular the dear man is!" said Miss Crombie.

"He is wonderful!" replied Miss Vestal.

"Walk home with me, dear," said Miss Crombie, "and have tea. The air is so fresh that I thought we might make a round and go down the Green Lane."

They walked on together.

Then, "That *lingerie!*" exclaimed Miss Crombie, pronouncing the word boldly.

"Did you really look at it closely?" said Miss Vestal, with some hesitation.

Miss Crombie replied: "Not closely. I had no desire to look closely."

"Nor I."

"But the sewing was very nicely done."

"So I thought, dear."

"If everything had been rather lower and higher, and broader——"

"If there had been more of everything, in fact——"

"And had the material been different——"

"Thicker——"

"Exactly, dear. Then one might have admired the fine sewing. I am not narrow; and given all those things, I would have expressed admiration of the work."

"It was merely the colour which made me look at them at all. Yellow——"

"The pink attracted me. I thought it a pretty shade."

"Hush!" said Miss Vestal.

The Green Lane ran by the walls of the Cloistered Hall, and the Professor himself was approaching his gates.

"Fancy meeting him!" Miss Crombie exclaimed.

"How well he walks!" Miss Vestal murmured.

Miss Crombie said, "I always admire that restrained, reticent expression of his when one is not looking. When one looks it vanishes and he laughs that beautiful hearty laugh. He might be own brother to our rector. But I often wonder of what he is thinking."

"These reserved looks cover a great deal," said Miss Vestal. "I do admire a reserved man. Professor Ruby has such high ideals; that is why he has never married. He replied to Mrs. Baker once, when she told him that a wife would be such a help in his position, that he was afraid of meeting with a great disappointment."

"Dear man!" murmured Miss Crombie.

"May his dreams come true!" said Miss Vestal, with holy fervour.

Each lady looked at the other a little askance.

"By the way, dear," said Miss Crombie, "what was the name of that wardrobe-dealer? Not that it matters. All I was wondering was if she was quite honest."

"Tizza, Petticoat Lane, I believe," said Miss Vestal, with a perfect nonchalance. "I jotted it down. But hush!"

The Professor drew level with them. He lifted his hat, very courtly.

"Indefatigable!" he cried, with laughter. "Indefatigable!"

He passed, laughing, through his gate.

The ladies continued their way, well rewarded for the *détour*.

When the scholar attained his own door he became pensive again. The high-thinking expression so revered and discussed by the ladies of Burtonbury sat in his eye. It was part an inspiration, part a dream, part a quest. Thus it had been dissected, and thus it was. Professor Ruby went through life seeking the ideal; and still he sought her.

What manner of woman was she? Where to be found? How should she attain that wonderful standard which such a man rightly asked?

Many ladies of the most upright character and impeccable manners would have cared to know.

The Professor found tea prepared in his study.

Seated at his desk, he helped himself from the lonely tray. He thought. His brow furrowed. Once or twice it cleared as at a vision, but furrowed again, and he shook his head. There was no laughter in him.

"When?" he inquired of himself; "when, oh, when?"

By nature he was not cold. He wished to marry. None was readier than he to tread the path assigned to man. But he had an ideal; and where to find her? How to be sure, quite, quite sure?

Seated thus lonely, the thoughtful man opened a drawer and took therefrom a picture; obviously he had mounted it himself upon a square of fine cardboard. One may imagine that it had been a labour of sheer love. It was a charming picture of beauty unadorned, and adorned the most.

A fair, smiling girl in the most entrancing—yet limited—of *dessous* gazed from the picture at the Professor. She represented, in fact, the favourite advertisement of the Three Graces Corset Company—an advertisement most familiar and popular with the public, since it occupied a full page of that most exemplary and respected of all family magazines, the *Charing Cross*.

Under such eminent chaperonage, indeed, Professor Ruby had found her, and she was intriguing. Oh, the shoulder-straps! The fluff and foam! She had bewitched more hearts than this ascetic's.

To-day he was asking himself, as he had often asked before: "Do they really wear these? I fear! I fear!"

A man of such unimpeachable morals, without spot or stain upon the bright lustre of his conscience, has no way of obtaining an answer to such a question, save one.

He can marry.

And then?

Supposing the answer to be in the negative?

And, given such an answer, suppose that someone else might have replied differently?

The bitterness of it!

One cannot wonder that this brilliant man whispered to himself, "I fear! I fear!"

After Mr. Ruby had put the picture away again he sat long with his head in his hands, despairing.

Up early the next morning, he beheld Miss Vestal hurrying for the early train. She was going up to London to buy the flannel for the soldiers' hospital shirts, to be made up by the working party. Hardly had the Professor's genial laughter ceased before he saw Miss Crombie out, posting an early letter in time for the postal clearance for London letters. Except for these two pleasant meetings, however, he passed a quietish morning with minor bereavements. When specially occupied with his problem he usually managed this. It was easier, somehow, than wreathing one's face in laughter, to pass into some lowly dwelling, appearing as harassed as one truly felt, and whispering, "The trouble, Mrs. Scraggs, the

trouble? How is it to-day? I am about to write a long letter to our rector, and must include *your* news," to leave the visited to do the rest, and to make an ever-enjoyable appearance in high-light melodrama. It will be noted with approbation how conscientiously this layman undertook the parochial duties of Burtonbury, as his part in the Great War. While composed in listening to the exhaustive genealogy of the ulcer, Professor Ruby dreamed some lovely little dreams.

At the end of the day he knew with the rest of Burtonbury that Miss Vestal had returned from London with two parcels, one containing Army flannel; and two days after this he heard, with other local gossip, that an inquiring postman had delivered a torn newspaper-wrapped package at Miss Crombie's door, and was talking about what the post-mistress said of the exuding contents; but the learned man was dreaming, and he recked naught.

It was shortly after this that Miss Crombie's maid-of-all-work met Miss Vestal's ditto, and, imparting to her news of curious phenomena, received certain information in return.

When one knows that Miss Vestal's maid was daughter to Mrs. Brown-Perkins's cook, it is scarcely necessary to dilate upon the matter further.

It was, in short, Mrs. Baker who, with her magnificent readiness to enter intimately into the affairs of anyone in the world, undertook to speak to Miss Crombie and Miss Vestal, and this within twelve hours of the conversation already mentioned.

One can readily understand that any evidence other than hearsay is indeed difficult to obtain in a case of this sort. Miss Crombie, on whom the first call was paid, wore, in fact, a suitable blouse of an opaque nature, and with a boned lace collar-band. One may put it that she was properly prepared to keep herself to herself.

"Mrs. Brown-Perkins and myself, and indeed all the other ladies, know everything," said Mrs. Baker, sitting in Miss Crombie's drawing-room, "and to say that we are astonished is not to express our feelings at all. In fact, we do not wish to express them. We feel that it is kinder not to do so. We are disgusted, Miss Crombie—disgusted. That is the word which just hints our sense of what you and Miss Vestal have done—I may say, of what you are doing. May I ask, are you wearing them at this very moment—as I sit talking to you?"

Miss Crombie hardily admitting it, Mrs. Baker hurried on: "Girls of your age should know better. You were forty-eight last birthday, and Caroline Vestal is slightly your senior. If your dear mothers were alive I do not know what would happen. Now, dear, we do not wish to be unkind, but we ask: What-ever pos-sessed you to do such a thing? Under what influence have you two girls fallen? Cannot I be of any help? Will not you be guided by Mrs. Brown-Perkins, who knows Lady Tubbs intimately? That was poor Mrs. Brown-Perkins's first thought. 'Oh!' that poor thing said, 'if I didn't move so much in fashionable society,' she said, 'this would never have happened. What are we to do about it? They say the butcher knows.' 'Leave it to me, dear,' I said. 'Let me go round,' I said, 'and talk to these two girls. I knew their dear mothers.' That is exactly what I said."

This splendid matron's pleading with Miss Vestal was of similar *genre*, and was similarly received. Something had happened to these two young ladies, something queer, hitherto inexperienced, and terribly natural. They had entered into temptation and fallen. Was it their fault? If Eve had lived in a garden where apple-trees simply wouldn't grow, she could not have eaten the apple. There are delicate and great problems in the world.

To Miss Vestal Mrs. Baker put the case urgently: "It is so terrible, so deceptive, of you to hurry off at once to London and buy—what you bought. And that Virginia Crombie should write the *very next day*, without a word to Mrs. Brown-Perkins! Burtonbury will ostracize you. You are washing them at home yourselves so that the laundry may not know, but remember that you both have young girls in your employment. Oh, think! I knew your dear mother. If our absent rector guessed! If Professor Ruby had even the faintest idea! Oh, Caroline! oh! How you will face that sainted man, knowing what you know, is past our comprehension."

"You will not tell him?" said Miss Vestal, breathing a little quicker.

"We *could* not tell him," replied Mrs. Baker, blushing deeply.

Miss Vestal's heart regained its normal beats.

The two young ladies received a request from Mrs. Brown-Perkins not to attend the War Relief Fund Committee again until a decision had been arrived at and further communication made. Meanwhile, would they carefully consider . . . .?

Ostracized from tea-party society, the recipients of stiff bows and cold looks instead of endearing greetings, it is to be expected

"THEY EACH BOUGHT ONE."

that they felt drawn to one another as never before. They never walked alone through the town now, but called for each other lovingly and shopped together.

Together, too, they spoke of their divergence from Burtonbury's graces. They began to dress their hair differently, to give their hats a rake, and they shortened their skirts by a full half-inch.

"I don't know what has come to me," said Miss Vestal, as they walked together down the High Street, "but it has come."

"The feeling of being all ninon underneath," said Miss Crombie, "is wonderful. I am taking a different view of sin. You are not shocked, dear?"

"In my own case," whispered Miss Vestal, "I feel it, too. I am dropping into this shop, dear, to buy myself a walking-stick."

They each bought one, and, having ordered the umbrellas they had been carrying to be sent home, swung the sticks fearlessly as they continued down the High Street.

Mrs. Scraggs kept her children away from Miss Crombie's Sunday-school class; Mrs. Brown-Perkins had a long talk with Dr. Hargraves, in which she begged him—delicately, of course—to explain the physical and psychic phenomena of the case; and only Professor Ruby remained oblivious for the space of one week.

At the end of a week Miss Vestal—ever the bolder of the two renegades—went the whole-hogger.

Corruption was festering in her. The seed was sown. The net was spread. The gin was set. Everything, in short, worked propitiously towards the devilish end. She saw Selfrod's advertisement on the front page of the daily paper, and she bought a transparent blouse.

Miss Crombie being a victim to headache that morning, Miss Vestal walked out alone into the High Street, and met Professor Ruby.

He had commenced to laugh, when he saw.

Bemused, he went pale. He said to himself in a daze: "What! Have I lived so near and yet so far from this lovely woman for twenty years? And has she worn them all the time?"

"Allow me to walk with you," he said, very, very softly. "There is nothing I would like better than to accompany you all my life. I dreamed about you last night."

They made a dazzling progress down the High Street. Ladies bowed to him flutteringly, but he did not laugh at all. He could not. He took Miss Vestal away quietly to her home by way of the leafy Green Lane.

"Here," he said, "near my gates, I have so often met you going about your dear little womanly errands. It has been a privilege which I have vastly enjoyed."

In Miss Vestal's drawing-room he sought her hand in marriage very ardently.

With such methods as he was inspired to employ, one need not wonder that he obtained it.

His happiness was intense. When he had to tear himself away to receive, as rector's delegate, a deputation of verger *versus* church-dusters at the Cloistered Hall he was rapturous. Awaiting the deputation, he took

from its hiding-place the Three Graces advertisement. With a pair of scissors he snipped the head out neatly, and sought a large photograph of a school-treat group which included Caroline Vestal. He decapitated her, placed her head upon the other shoulders, and gazed at her dreamily. True, she wore a hat; but this did not really detract from the *ensemble*. Her decorum, too, added piquancy. It was something after the best Kirchner style.

While the deputation was raising a grievous discussion, with the Professor as judge and counsel to both parties all at once, as to whether the verger or the lady church-dusters should track the horny spider to his lair, Miss Vestal, flushed, palpitating, and happy, had hurried round to Miss Crombie.

"THERE IS NOTHING I WOULD LIKE BETTER THAN TO ACCOMPANY YOU ALL MY LIFE."

Miss Vestal had changed into a nice satin blouse, and carried a parcel.

She fell upon Miss Crombie's neck and embraced her.

"Dearest!" she said, "dearest! dearest!"

"Dearest!" said Miss Crombie.

"Guess my news!" Miss Vestal panted.

"Oh, Caroline!" said Miss Crombie.

"You are quite right, dear," replied Miss Vestal, "that is it."

It should be placed to Miss Crombie's credit that her generous heart permitted her—after the first few pangs—to display nothing but unbounded enthusiasm. The two girls sat down hand in hand, and, gazing raptly into each other's eyes, conversed in hushed voices.

"When will it be, dear?" Miss Crombie inquired, tenderly.

"Soon," said Miss Vestal, sighing, "very soon, I am afraid. I fear that Charles will hurry me. You can guess how agitating it all is! He appeared so eager!"

"With you as leader of Burtonbury," said Miss Crombie, "Mrs. Brown-Perkins will have to bow her head."

"Regarding Mrs. Brown-Perkins, dearest," said Miss Vestal, "I feel most strongly now that, about a *certain matter*, she was right. I met her on my way here and told her *the news*, and her first thought was of—you know, dearest. Almost before she had begun to speak, I replied most emphatically, 'Of course I shall! Can you ask?' I said. And here I am, dear, and here they are, including those which I had on this morning when it took place, and which I will rinse out in your bathroom, if I may run up there at once, but I felt that my house was not the place for them for *one moment longer*."

Here Miss Vestal untied the string and displayed in all their fragile temptations her six sets of yellow ninon lingerie.

"I brought them straight to you, dear," said she; "take them. It is a pleasure. You will understand how I feel about them. Knowing what Charles would suffer, I could not: no. I simply could not. They may not be so unsuitable for an unmarried girl like yourself, but in my future position—I need say no more. How I shuddered this morning! Believe me, I felt hot and cold, and then cold and hot. If Charles had noticed! Oh, Virginia!"

Shivering a little still, Miss Vestal con-

tinued: "I had on my new blouse, too—I have put it here, and beg your acceptance of it—and all the while I was thinking, 'Oh, if he sees!' But love is blind, Virginia. Happily it is so."

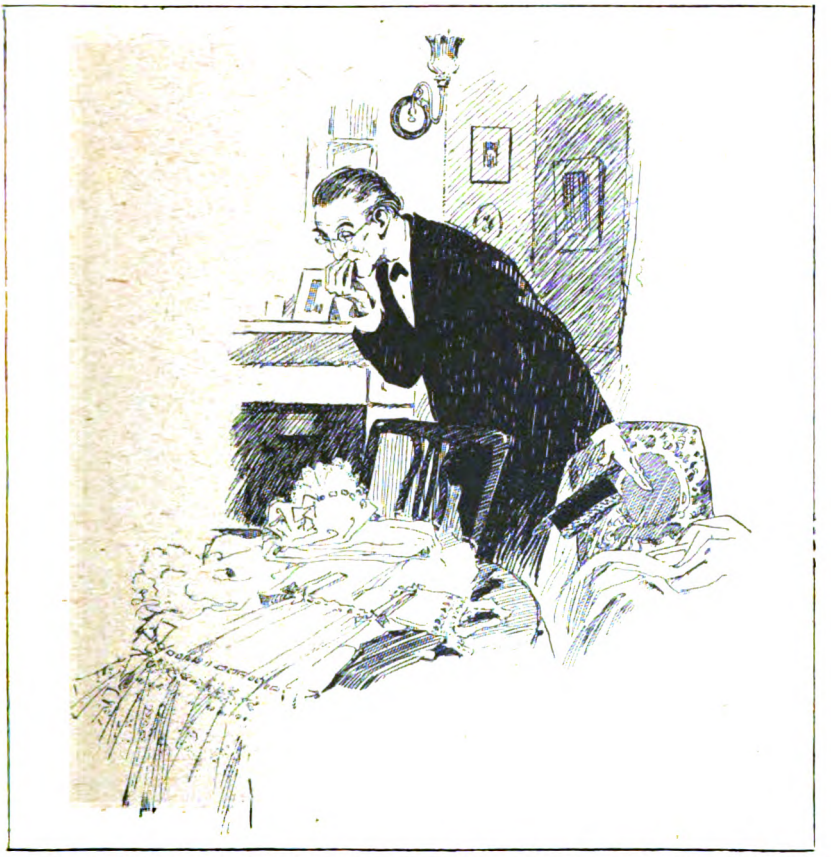
Miss Crombie was profoundly impressed by the possible catastrophe, only averted, as it were, by the veil of a sweet infirmity.

She wished to envisage the whole luxurious heap.

Glory!

They ranged over the round table in her drawing-room, entirely obscuring Tennyson, some family photographs, and ten books of seaside views.

Miss Crombie then, hastily recalled by her



"IT IS NEEDLESS TO SAY THAT HE WAS STRUCK, STAGGERED, MUTE, AND TREMULOUS, BEFORE, WITH AN EFFORT, HE PULLED HIMSELF TOGETHER."

"You will take them, Virginia?" said Miss Vestal; "indeed, I feel they are your due."

The warm-hearted girl spoke from a sense of that pure justice more often met with in the French exercise-book than in women; thus: "I shall have a husband, but you will have six yellow ninon sets."

She kissed Miss Crombie very tenderly, made an arrangement about the duties of chief bridesmaid, and went away.

Virginia Crombie was a woman; no more, no less.

For awhile she was content to sit dreaming, imaging the yellow; then she went upstairs and fetched the pink.

young maid to the duty of morning shopping too long postponed, left all the eleven sets there, put on her hat, and hurried out.

This was the moment which Fate selected for Professor Ruby to call for the purpose of begging Miss Crombie to replace, as church-duster, one of the ladies who, refusing all arbitration, had resigned her responsibility only half an hour before.

The young maid shut him in the drawing-room to wait.

Professor Ruby was a man; no more, no less.

Thanks entirely to the Three Graces advertisement, he was enabled to guess at

the nature of what he saw before him. It is needless to say that he was struck, staggered, mute, and tremulous, before, with an effort—for he was not weak—he pulled himself together.

He spent a charming quarter of an hour in idealistic thought before he rang for the young maid.

He took her by the hand, led her up to the table, and she uttered a scream.

"Oh, sir," she said, faintly, "forgive me! Pardon me, sir! I didn't know they was there."

"Mary Scraggs," said the Professor, in a new, strong voice, "answer my questions immediately. Remember who I am and what you are. Anything which I demand of you will be perfectly right and proper. Now, are you ready?"

"Yes, sir," the young girl replied, and closed her eyes.

Professor Ruby retained her wrist in an iron grip, being vastly moved.

"These garments, Mary Scraggs, belong to Miss Caroline Vestal, I believe?"

"Please, sir," the young girl replied, more faintly yet, "the yeller did; but the pink was Miss Crombie's."

Professor Ruby was ruthless and strong, desperate and cunning. In his present mood not even his rector could have foiled him. Pursuing his train of discovery:—

"And now, Mary Scraggs?"

"Please, sir, Miss Vestal brought all hers and gave them to Miss Crombie only this morning."

"How do you know this, Mary Scraggs?"

"Please, sir," the young girl replied, "I was very near the drawing-room door."

"You heard what was said?"

"Please, sir, yes. Miss Vestal won't wear hers no more."

Releasing the maiden's wrist, the Professor caught a bead of perspiration as it trickled down his brow. A faint groaning sound escaped him.

"Go, Mary!" he said, when he could speak naturally.

An idealist is frequently a man of action, and when vision and action meet, what a force we have!

Miss Crombie, returning with her basket, found Professor Ruby in the act of packing a parcel swiftly. He used the brown paper and string brought by Miss Vestal a little earlier, and upon the table Tennyson, the family portraits, and the seaside books had emerged again. As for the Professor, he was singing one of the well-known Indian love-lyrics in a clear voice.

Without a moment's hesitation he took Miss Crombie in his arms and embraced her passionately.

"My dearest girl," said he, with an ardour of which she had never dreamed even after the advent of yellow *robes de nuit*, "once I saw through a glass darkly, but now I know I see I love you. For years you have been my ideal, and searching my heart this morning I know I have no other. Kiss me just once kiss!"

"Oh, Caroline! Caroline!" cried Miss Crombie, wringing her hands as well as she could. "Oh, my poor betrayed friend! Oh Professor, mine cannot be the hand to smite her!"

Filled with a wonderful exhilaration, Miss Crombie was kissed by the ascetic and high-souled man.

"Leave your conscience to me," he said, more passionately yet. "Let the atonement for man's frailty be my part. I love you. Will you be mine?"

"It will be in all the papers," trembled Miss Crombie. "A breach of promise. It will be terrible. . . . Yes, Charles, I will."

Professor Ruby pressed on. "To-day?"

"Oh, Charles!" murmured Miss Crombie, covering her face. "I cannot. I am not ready. And surely—at a day's notice——"

"If anyone knows how to be married at a day's notice, I do," said Professor Ruby, most firmly. "I will not postpone it for an hour. You are to come now at once, as you are. We are going to fly, and I shall represent to the rector that a special licence——"

"But I must pack. Oh, Charles!"

One knows that the Professor guessed but too well what delay meant.

"I cannot come as I am," said Miss Crombie, thinking; and one knows what she thought.

"Just as you are, in what you stand up in," said he, more and more ardently. "I ask no better. You are looking lovely. As for packing, seeing a few things on the table and presuming them to be yours, my love, I hastily put them together. We will take them. Do not think of to-morrow. Leave all to me. One more kiss, and then——"

It surely suffices to say that he hurried her, breathless yet exalted, away to the station, by way of the Green Lane, "where," he whispered as they went, "I have so often had the privilege of watching you go by on your beautiful womanly errands"; that they caught, by lovers' luck, an immediate train; that Professor and Mrs. Charles Ruby are still at the Cloistered Hall; and that Mrs. Brown-Perkins has bowed her head.

MULTUM IN PARVO.

A COMPENDIUM OF SHORT ARTICLES.

A COMPETITION OF PET-STORIES.

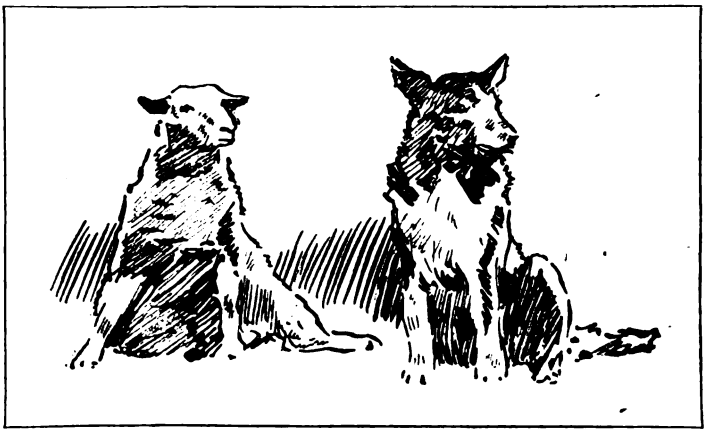
BY DR. GERDA B. JACOBI.

A WELL-KNOWN Swedish newspaper recently started a prize competition, to deal with the subject of the most original animal pet. Nearly two hundred manuscripts and photographs were sent in, containing descriptions of no fewer than one hundred and twenty-three different representatives of the animal kingdom, ranging from bears and lions down to snakes and fleas! It had been stipulated that dogs, cats, and horses should not be allowed to compete. Oxen and cows were allowed, but, strangely enough, none of these had inspired their owners to sing their praise. Sheep and goats, on the other hand, are well represented, and most wonderful things are related of their intelligence and power of adaptability. Imagine a pig which has learnt to bark like a dog! The reputation of the often despised pig has now been firmly re-established. No fewer than ten persons sing his praise, admire his soft pink skin, scrupulous cleanliness, and sociability. That is, as long as he is young; in every case the fate of the beloved pig ended with a catastrophe by the time the bristle had fully developed and the hoofs had become hard. Then comes a motley company of hens, geese, ducks, pigeons, and rabbits; and if anyone has doubted the intelligence of these animals he will be completely converted after reading these descriptions. Among the wild animals, crows, jackdaws, and squirrels are, of course, the favourites; there must be few Swedish boys who have not been the happy possessors of one of these pets. Ravens and magpies are also represented; the stories of their droll thievishness are many. Several monkeys, of course, figure in the list, and also badgers, mice, foxes, hares, and stags. Excellent examples are also given of the intelligence and affectionate nature of the seal. The stories about the liveliness and amiability of the tortoise are not quite convincing, and the same may be said about a story of a tame perch. All kinds of small birds are well represented; more rare is a tame sand-lizard and an adder which had made its home in a glass bottle. Among insects we find a fly, a beetle, and even a flea! Not a frivolous circus flea, but an affectionate family flea, a real paragon of its kind.

"THE WHOLE ACTION OF THE MOUSE WAS A VERY ELOQUENT QUESTION: 'CAN YOU HAVE THE HEART TO LEAVE MY POOR OLD MOTHER WITHOUT FOOD?'"

Among the stories that were rewarded with a prize, that of a mouse is most pathetic. A lady who was staying in an old country house one evening noticed a mouse coming out from behind the old-fashioned stove. Discovering a piece of rusk on the hearthstone, the mouse sat down to eat it. She did not appear to be very shy, because when another piece was put down in the same place, although retiring meanwhile behind the stove, she soon came out again and continued her meal. After having finished she quite unconcernedly washed her little muzzle with her paws, and then disappeared behind the stove. After this day the mouse came punctually every evening at seven o'clock to see if any food had been left for her on the hearthstone. It was noticed that at every meal she always saved a piece of the food, which was carried off in her mouth on leaving. One evening no food was put down, on purpose to see how the mouse would behave. With a precision that never failed she arrived as usual when the farm closing-bell struck seven. By her behaviour she showed great astonishment at not finding her usual portion waiting for her. She went round the room sniffing everywhere, and at last came and sat down in front of the narrator, looking intently at her all the time. But as no notice was taken of her she finally departed. About half an hour later she returned, but this time not alone. She carefully pushed in front of her a somewhat larger mouse, looking old and worn, who was apparently blind. This was probably her mother, and it now became clear that it was for her that the young mouse had saved part of her food every evening. The whole action of the mouse was a very eloquent question: "Can you have the heart to leave my poor old mother without any food this evening?" The mice were now given a

piece of cheese, which they greatly enjoyed, and on this occasion no food was carried off on leaving, showing the correctness of the assumption that it was for her blind old mother that the mouse had saved part of her food. Needless to say she was always provided with a double portion after this,



A YOUNG RAM THAT FROM EARLY INFANCY MADE FRIENDS WITH A LAPLAND DOG.

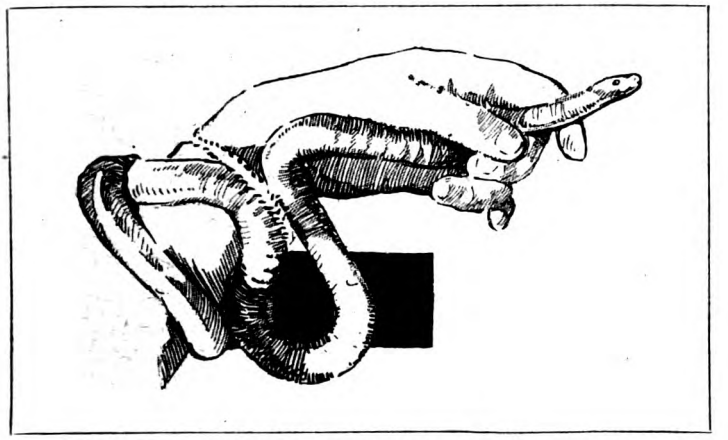
and she never brought her mother with her again. At last this little mouse became so tame that she did not mind even strangers walking about the room. It sometimes appeared as if she was actually listening to the sounds of the conversation carried on around her, as she would drop her piece of food and put her head on one side as if listening. The further fate of this interesting mouse is not known, as the narrator left and the house soon afterwards underwent a thorough repair.

An amusing description is given of a little pig brought up by a dog. On an estate in the south of Sweden they had as a watchdog a female Great Dane by the name of Molly, who frequently presented her owners with a family of puppies, but, heartlessly enough, they were seldom allowed to live. One summer's day, when Molly had just been bereaved of eight new-born babies and—like another Niobe—was bowed down with grief, the swineherd brought the information that a sow had just brought forth thirteen little pigs. As she would not be able to nurse more than twelve of them, he suggested that the supernumerary one should be adopted by Molly. The little pig was fetched and placed by the side of the still deeply-sorrowing Molly. The result was great mutual satisfaction. Never has a little pig been so carefully brought up as Nassalina (fem. for "Nasse," Swedish nursery-name for pig), the name given to Molly's nurse-child. Molly washed Nassalina most carefully, and the two lived together in a nice clean kennel. Nassalina entered it with the help of a small ladder, and at first Molly had to assist her by placing her muzzle between the little hind legs and with a gentle push tumble her into the kennel. Very soon Nassalina was able to follow Molly everywhere. There was another large dog, a son of Molly, and he too showed a remarkable partiality for Nassalina. He often acted as her maid, to the great detriment of the pink silk ribbon with which she was adorned. The two dogs used to lie in the sand before the front entrance with Nassalina between them, and it always caused great astonishment to guests to be welcomed on their arrival by a little shiny pink pig, who with curled tail used to rush forward with a friendly grunt, flanked on each side by the two large dogs. On one occasion a most dignified old coachman nearly dropped the reins at the sight of Nassalina, who, cheerful and curious, had climbed up the steps, where she sat dog-fashion and admired the smart turn-out. She had a peculiar way of grunting, mixed with "dog-language," and especially when playing with the dogs and pulling their long ears she made an effort to appear as "doggy" as possible and made a sound that was a very good imitation of a dog's bark. When the family went for walks they were always accompanied by the two dogs and Nassalina. If the dogs then found something interesting on the other side of a ditch and jumped over it, Nassalina used to stop and wail most pitifully. Kind old Molly then always returned and consoled her nurse-child with her long, soft tongue. If the walk was a long one Nassalina used to get tired, and would stop and scream until she was carried. As soon as her legs were long enough she used to mount the kitchen stairs and enter to beg for some dainty. Strangely enough, her favourite dish was—bacon! But, alas! Nassalina grew too big to be kept as a pet, and she was regretfully sent down to share the company of her relatives. They did not welcome her very warmly and she was not happy in their company. Molly felt the parting very much, and many times during the day she used to go down to the pigsty and place herself with hanging head in front of Nassalina's pen. The latter would then rush forward, grunting and whining, and long and tender conversations followed.

Another striking example of animal adaptability is that of a young ram at present living at a farm in Central Sweden. From early infancy he made friends with a somewhat older Lapland dog, and has taken such a strong impression from this cultured society that he now imagines himself to be a watchdog. Quite spontaneously he has adopted a dog's way of sitting down, and he also follows his master about everywhere.

A lady in Stockholm gives a description of a pet snake, worn by her as a bracelet. A friend wanted to present her with a silver snake, but she answered that she would prefer a living one. Her friend took her seriously, and the following day invited her to dine with him and the snake at a well-known restaurant. He brought the animal in a cardboard box; it was a specimen of the handsome leopard snake, more than

three feet long. In the middle of the dinner the snake managed to escape from the box and caused quite a panic among the other guests until it was secured again. The snake soon became a favourite and received the name of Repu. Adorning the arm of his mistress, he accompanied her both to private parties and places of



A PET SNAKE WORN AS A BRACELET.

entertainment. He was very fond of climbing about palm-trees and chandeliers, and he loved music. Once at a party, when he had climbed up a large palm-tree and could not be reached, the tune of "The Merry Widow" induced him to come down. Dogs did not appreciate Repu; they used to bark furiously at him, and he, being no coward, at once placed himself in a position of defence, hissing and striking at the dog, meanwhile clutching his mistress's arm so tightly that it became numb. When the family was staying in the country Repu on several occasions got out of the window and explored the neighbourhood. On one occasion he stayed away for two days, and then returned voluntarily. But at the end of the summer he one day went off and never returned.

Another amusing description is that of a cock who was at one time in danger of starving to death from pure chivalry to the ladies of his family. In a previous existence he had probably been a man of science and a lady-killer. Some unworthy action had sent him back to this planet in the shape of a cock, but as a real Wyandotte, with broad chest, straight legs, and an elegant curve of the tail. He is possessed of a pride almost amounting to haughtiness, and has a pronounced weakness for the fair sex. His scientific reminiscences are made practical use of in the poultry-yard. He knows exactly how many times a beetle should be beaten against the ground to become soft enough to offer to the ladies; how an earthworm should be approached with noiseless steps and outstretched neck; how a sudden pinch on a cat's tail makes it leave the chickens alone; how easily an apple falls off a tree if a pinch is given to its stalk; and how great the danger is when the hawk is seen as an immovable spot just above the poultry-yard. Then no time must be lost in driving into safety his shrieking family. All proud gestures are then forgotten; like a madman he rushes about until all his ladies have disappeared through the aperture of the hen-house and he is allowed to retire himself. But he soon puts out his head again to see if all danger is past, and because of his constant watchfulness he has been given the name of Heimdal (a Scandinavian deity whose watchfulness nothing could escape). His gallantry to the ladies is most admirable. Without any wavering and without having taken any impression from the spirit of the times, he ever remains faithful to his conviction: ladies first! With his beak in the air and his hands in his pockets (if he had any), he struts round his greedy ladies as if he were saying: "Please help yourselves; it is at my invitation!" And with the air of a connoisseur he chooses a dainty morsel and places it before some favoured little hen. Even the narrator was one day shown a similar favour. Heimdal came running from the kitchen carrying some stolen dainty, but on discovering her he altered his course. A piece of meat was deposited at her feet, and with deep curtsies he uttered his friendly "Please, please!" But although greatly flattered at being regarded as an intimate member of the family, she refused the dainty. Because of his chivalry Heimdal became so thin that it was necessary to provide him with an extra meal, which he now partakes of in the company of the cat and dog. Rain or shine, he punctually arrives at the kitchen door, in order to be able to satisfy his hunger without deference to questions of etiquette. With the cat and dog he does not think it necessary to stand on any ceremony, and pussy even gets a pinch in her side if she does not keep to her own corner of the plate.

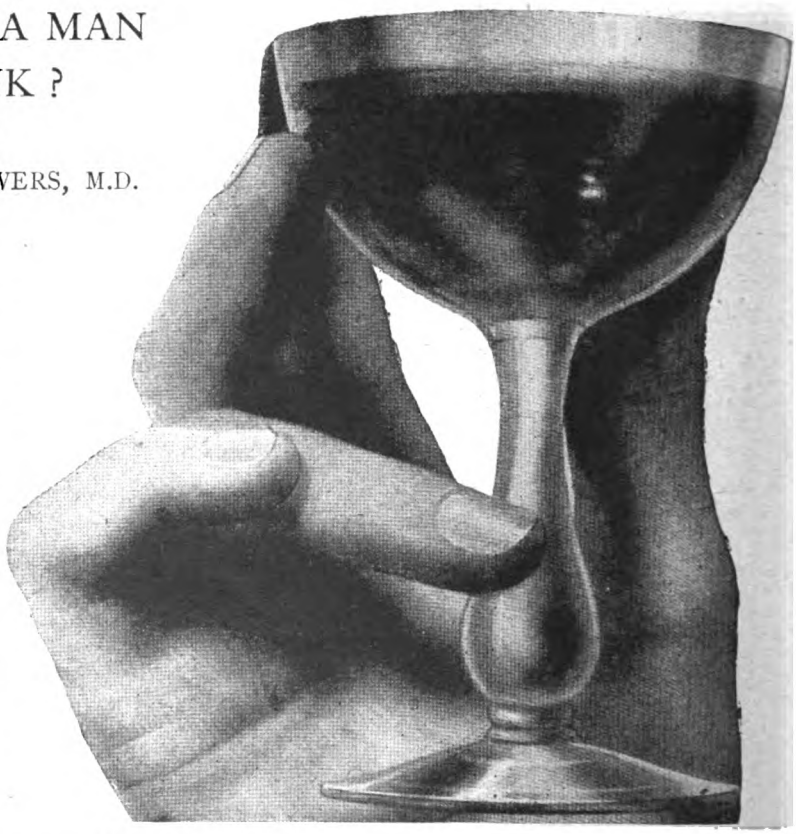
A TAME CROW WHOSE FAVOURITE PERCH WAS HER MASTER'S HAT.

From the very north of Sweden comes a story of a tame crow. Early in the spring a naughty boy had taken the young bird from the nest. She soon became domesticated. When she had learnt to fly she made excursions far and wide, but always returned to the veranda, where she knew that she would find her food. Soon, however, her favourite place became her master's hat. Wherever he went the crow accompanied him, balancing herself on the hat. At last she became so persistent that it was necessary to escape by the back door to avoid her inconvenient friendship. She also insisted on sleeping in her master's room; but here she was no trouble, as she sat very quietly at the head of the bed, and in the morning flew out of the window. She was an accomplished pickpocket, and had learnt to lift up the flaps of coat-pockets. She often stole the matchbox, and was not satisfied until she had emptied it of all its matches. One day when there was a dinner-party on the veranda and the chief guest was holding a dessert-spoon in his hand, the crow came flying, took the spoon from the astonished gentleman's hand, and flew off with it. When September came and swarms of crows arrived on their way south the tame crow grew restless, neglected her daily bath, and stayed away in the woods more and more frequently. One day all the crows disappeared, and the tame crow also. Early one morning on a day in the following April somebody knocked at the bedroom window; it was the tame crow. She wanted to see her old home again, but would not come in; she had become wild. What may she not have experienced during her visits to southern countries! Being ignorant of all crow-customs, she had probably suffered much from the tyranny of the other crows. But in spite of her culture she was irresistibly drawn to her relatives and forced by instinct to become a member of their social community

WHEN IS A MAN DRUNK?

BY

EDWIN F. BOWERS, M.D.



THE average man drinks because he is an average man and a moderate drinker, and because he knows that he can stop if he wishes. "An occasional drink, yes, sir; a bracer—certainly; but intoxicated—*never!*"

But one of the first things the scientists found out when they commenced to measure drunkenness and its effects was that every man who drank alcohol was drunk—in degree—for two or three days afterwards.

Now, it is altogether too much to expect a man who has taken only one or two drinks to realize that he is drunk—to a definite, measurable, and analyzable extent. But those little clocks, intricate wheels, and serene mechanical devices of the laboratory will know it. There is no guesswork; you can't hypnotize a writing balance, psychologize an ergograph, or bamboozle a memory-test. The uniformity in their results is ruthless and final.

An Interesting Eperiment with Your Index Finger.

An excellent index of a man's capability for work is the weight he can continue to lift with the index finger. So our scientists requisitioned the ergograph, a celebrated laboratory device invented by Professor Angelo Mosso, to prove a few pertinent facts. In manipulating this testing machine the fingers are clenched around a wooden peg, all but the index finger, and the arm held immovable by being clamped to the arm of a chair. A weight of several kilogrammes (a kilogramme equals 2·2046 pounds) suspended by a small rope that passes over a pulley is raised and lowered by this index finger, until the subjects are forced to desist from exhaustion.

The scientists who probed into the powers of King Alcohol made their subjects repeat this process twelve times, with intervening rests of a minute. Each pull was recorded automatically on a strip of paper, registered by a line. The sum of the lengths of all the lines was translated into "metre kilogrammes," which meant the work accomplished by the index finger, in raising one kilogramme one metre (39·37 inches) against the pull of gravity.

These experiments were made ten times daily, and the total average for each man calculated for a number of days, under conditions of absolute abstention from drink. Then the men were given a "good glass" of Bordeaux wine, or its alcoholic equivalent—about one-third ounce of alcohol freely diluted with water—after each meal, and the experiments repeated. The consequences were a diminution in the ability to withstand the fatigue of weight-lifting amounting to seven and six-tenths to eight per cent. These experiments were duplicated hundreds of times by scientists in various parts of Europe. In every instance a definite, measurable loss in muscular efficiency was shown.

You Can't Write as Fast or as Accurately After One Drink.

Learned professors next advanced to the consideration of principles involving combined muscular and mental processes. They used the "writing balance," invented by Dr. Kraepelin, probably the most eminent living authority on mental and nervous diseases. This ingenious contrivance had attached to it a fifth-second chronometer which automatically registered time on a rotating drum covered with carbon-paper. On the record obtained in this manner the time required in writing a set of characters can be computed with an error of less than one two-hundredths of a second. The unit of time on which the trials were based is called a "zeta," which corresponds to one one-hundredth of a second.

The daily exercises began at 8 a.m. The subject's scientifically sober hand was connected with the apparatus, and the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 were written twice with pencil at top speed. Then the sequence was reversed—10, 9, 8, 7, etc., was twice written; then the letters "inm," also twice. These were repeated ten times, and the total average time consumed by each man was measured. Then he received his allotment of wine, as with the ergograph experiments.

After five minutes the subjects resumed their writing, with instructions to carry out their appointed task in scribbling as before. They proved that, while the spirit was willing, the flesh and its controlling nerve impulses were weakened. Every man had slowed up measurably. The degree of retardation, after writing 1 to 10 under the influence of a small amount of alcohol (what the ordinary drinker might take with his dinner), amounted to five and six-tenths per cent. In writing 10 to 1 the retardation was greater, amounting to seven per cent. This was accounted for by the increasing complexity of the task, it being a more unusual combination than the straight progression of numbers. With the "inm" the deviation from normal was even more apparent, averaging seven and three-tenths per cent. Again and again these same general results were secured, though new men were used for each demonstration.

For the next experiment a number of accountants were selected, and their average ability to add one-figure columns was estimated for one week. They were then given daily, in divided doses, the alcoholic equivalent of a pint of light beer. A marked and progressive diminution in their output was noticed, beginning with three and one-tenth per cent. the first day. After two weeks of this steady, moderate alcoholic allowance the percentage increased to fifteen and three-tenths. With these facts and figures in mind it should not be difficult to determine the whys and wherefores of the relatively slow and inaccurate Monday morning's accounting and balancing.

Similar experiments were then tried on typesetters. These were required to set type from uniformly-printed pages, the total number of "ems" a day being computed for a week. Then, with daily drinks, the kind that millions of moderate drinkers take every day, the typesetters, in one week, lost an average of nine and six-tenths per cent. in efficiency. And these particular typesetters are representative of the average typesetter, printer, typewriter, and linotype operator all over the world.

How Alcoholic Drinks Affect the Memory.

In the beginning the investigators wrote the simplest and most practical tests. As they gradually worked up to more complex mental processes the decrease in efficiency became more noticeable. This was particularly marked in the "memory tests," which demanded committing to memory for a half-hour every morning as many twelve-place figures as was possible for each subject to remember. The students would curl their legs round the chairs, chew the ends of their pencils, look up at the ceiling, and mumble "one six nine, eight seven three, two one eight, one six two," or some other group of twelve numbers, until they could say them without effort. They would then tackle the next group, committing as many twelve-number sets to memory as was possible in the course of half an hour, repeating each set in a whisper to a mentor seated beside them. This was practised for a fortnight, after which their average was computed.

Then the subjects were given each morning just about what would be considered a good "eye-opener" by the average drinker. The next two weeks showed an average reduction of six and two-tenths per cent. in the number of twelve-place figures committed to memory.

The beginnings of memory-crumbling have been demonstrated experimentally by Dr. R. Vogt, of the University of Christiania. During seven months' alternating experiments in memorizing twenty-five lines of Homer were made with and without alcohol. The time required for repetition without mistake averaged eighteen per cent. longer during the alcohol periods than during the abstinent days.

The amount of alcohol given corresponded to that in slightly more than a half-pint of four-per-cent. beer. When the system had accustomed itself to alcohol—in other words, when the abnormal condition became the condition normal to the subject—it took between five and seven per cent. more time to perform these memory-tests.

In these trials the alcohol was taken after breakfast, but when the drink was taken before breakfast—"on an empty stomach"—the lengthening of the required memory-period went up to sixty-nine per cent. Which seems to be a pretty strong argument for not beginning the day with a drink.

One of the most remarkable features connected with these studies was developed when thirty-eight of these daily memorizations were repeated after one hundred and seven and one hundred and eight days. This repetition brought out the startling fact that the time required to recall the memorized lines was uniformly and invariably greater in the case of those stanzas learned on alcohol days!

Perhaps the most convincing observations were

concerned in the free "association of ideas." To illustrate: If the name of an object is spoken, immediately one thinks of something in connection with that object. Kraepelin's subjects were requested to note these, enumerating as many associated objects as occurred to them in the space of five minutes. Two words were given out at each session. This was repeated at intervals during the day for ten days, and the average number of suggested things reckoned up. Then each evening preceding the next ten days a generous "nightcap" was given, and the results of the following ten days' "association" computed. The loss in co-ordinating power in this series amounted to as high as twenty-seven per cent.

This was a remarkably convincing demonstration, and proves conclusively that one who drinks much is living only a small part of his normal life, for his brain is narcotized—partly paralyzed—by the action of liquor.

Some Interesting Experiments.

Shortly before his death, Dr. J. J. Ridge, an English physiologist, made a series of experiments which point conclusions of tremendous importance to railroad men. He selected a group of ten medical students, nurses, and porters. Placing a row of letters at the end of a corridor, he made each member of the group walk slowly from the other end until the letters could be read, changing, of course, the sequence of the letters in each case. A chalk mark was drawn upon the floor to indicate the spot from which the farthest degree of vision in each person's case was possible, and each individual's initial was marked beside it.

He then supplied his subjects with beer in quantities ranged from half a pint to as small an amount as one-sixteenth of a pint—which not even the most captious critic would claim an excessive quantity, or the basis for an unfair test.

On repeating the test, it was found that in no single instance could any of the victims read the letters from the spot where they had originally stood. All had to move closer.

Professor Kraepelin, checking these experiments of Dr. Ridge, found that, on an average, a man who had taken the alcoholic equivalent of a pint of beer, or one and one-third ounces of whisky, half an hour afterwards had to approach to twenty feet in order to read letters he had previously read at thirty feet. The effect in diminished vision, he found, lasted for from four to five hours after drinking.

Another experiment of especial interest to railroad men was made in which subjects were required to decide which of two motions to make at a given signal, as an engine-driver, when a red light flashes out on the track before him, must decide in the fraction of a second the action which will guide his train and passengers to safety.

If a green flag showed, the subject was to press an electric button at his right; if a red flag, the button at the left. For a short time after taking the small amount of alcohol contained in a bottle of claret, he pressed the button more quickly, but he was much more likely to press the wrong one. Increasing the amount of alcohol slowed up the time of response, and markedly increased the number of errors.

This shows the peril a drinking man may bring to any business requiring rapid giving, receiving, and answering of signals; for alcohol slows the correct reading of signals, and invariably increases the liability to make mistakes. It is for this reason that so many American railroads demand alcoholic abstinence from all men who operate their trains.

So these studies in exact science, made under the strictest conditions, indicate that alcohol depresses, anæsthetizes, and narcotizes, and that its first effects on the nerves are to diminish acuteness and pervert activity. Sending the blood to the head, where it surges through the brain with increased velocity, is not increased vigour but increased irritation, which comes just before anæsthesia and diminution of power. The drinker deludes himself, for he only thinks he is thinking. His very first drink has produced a definite, measurable degree of intoxication.

Therefore, it seems quite clear that if a man has any brains worth preserving, alcohol is the poorest preservative he could possibly pick out to use.

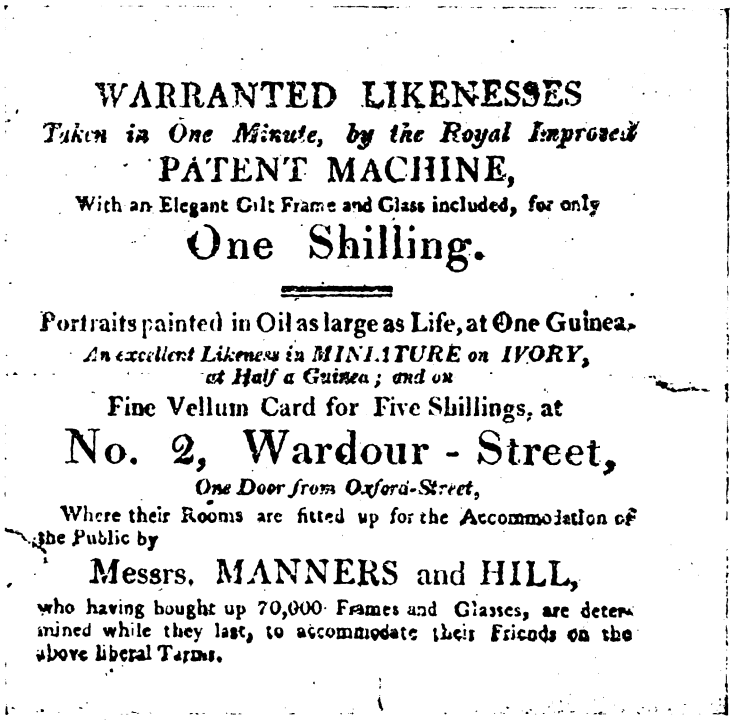
UNIQUE DICKENS DISCOVERIES.

BY CHARLES VAN NOORDEN.

AMONG my recent Dickens discoveries, first of all I have been lucky enough to find a contemporary handbill of the Profile machine (1), by which we see that Sam Weller's simile to the pretty housemaid, that her portrait was taken on his heart "in much quicker time and brighter colours than ever a likeness was took by the profeel masheen, though it does finish a portrait and put the frame and glass on complete with a hook at the end to hang it up by all in two minutes and a quarter," was justified, and further that it was done, frame and all, for one shilling. This is the only copy known.

The phosphorus-box in which Steerforth dipped a match and "shed a blue glare over us that was gone directly," when David Copperfield was storytelling in Salem House dormitory, was the first of the forerunners of the safety match of to-day, and succeeded the old flint-and-steel combination. A splint of wood tipped with sulphur was dipped into a bottle containing phosphorus, and, being drawn quickly into the air, the phosphorus at once oxidized and inflamed. Sometimes you got it, sometimes you didn't. Only three examples are known of this early light-producer, and the phosphorus fumes have eaten off the paper labels of all of them. The label I show (2) has been preserved in an old scrap-book, from which I rescued it. It is the only one known.

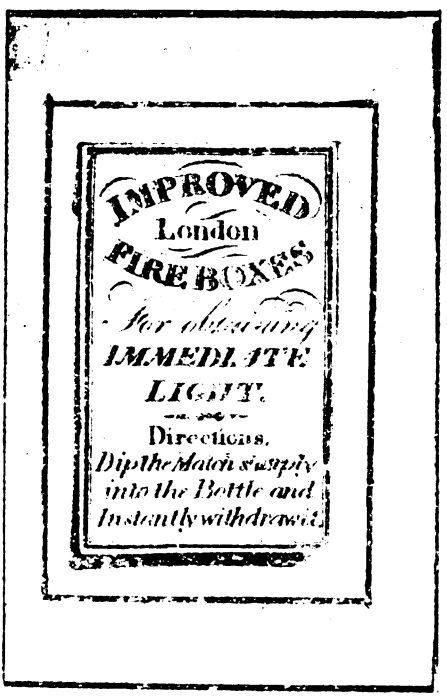
When the paybook of *Household Words* turned up and Dickens's own contributions were first identified with certainty, I discovered among them several with a strong autobiographical flavour, especially one entitled "Gone Astray," in which he narrated how a



I.—A CONTEMPORARY ADVERTISEMENT OF THE PROFILE MACHINE. THE ONLY COPY KNOWN.

small boy had got lost one day in London, and his subsequent adventures, including a visit to a theatre. It is through this last item that I have been able to verify that in "Gone Astray" we have a real episode of the great writer's childhood.

I first identified the theatre by the "G.R." over the doorway, "near Goodman's Fields," as the Royalty, or East London Theatre, which stood where is now the Seamen's Home in Wells Street; then by a most miraculous stroke of good fortune I found a playbill (3) of the year and time when this adventure took place. Bills of this minor theatre are very scarce. There are none at all near this date in the British Museum. So to find this very play is indeed a miracle. Comparing the following extracts from the story (printed in the "Miscellaneous Papers" of Charles Dickens) with the



2.—A LABEL FROM ONE OF THE PHOSPHORUS-BOXES USED BY STEERFORTH, THE ONLY ONE KNOWN.

playbill of "The Mutiny of the *Britannia*"—the "sailors pitching about with telescopes and speaking-trumpets . . . it was awful to suspect the pilot of treachery though impossible to avoid it, for when he cried 'We are lost! To the raft! To the raft! A thunderbolt has struck the mainmast!' I myself saw him take the mainmast out of its socket and drop it overboard"; and then to read on the programme of the English man-of-war, the raft floating on the ocean, and other corroborative details—can it be denied that the resemblance is exact?

It is of interest to find from that playbill that the enactor of the pilot was Mr. Roxby Beverly, the Crummles of the Royalty.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that here is an eye-witness's own story of that naval melodrama performed in 1823, when, as "Gone

Astray" mentions, he had just come up from the country, and that consequently it was an experience of Dickens's own.

One of the objects of Dickens's first visit to America in 1842 was to view for himself the City of Cairo, which a certain Darius B. Holbrook had been exploiting in Europe, and especially in London. Much money was lost. It is said, in an article by Dr. Snyder, of Springfield, Illinois, that Dickens himself had invested in it, and that this was the reason of his bitter denunciation of the project as given both in "American Notes" and in "Martin Chuzzlewit," in which latter it is set forth as Eden City, with Colonel Scadder to stand for Holbrook. I am fortunate to be able to show here (4) a photograph of one of the only two bonds known to exist for that hopeless undertaking. There is no copy of them in the Illinois State Library. The vignette shows a thriving town and cargo-steamers at the entrance to a great canal; but that was purely illusory—it *was*, in actual fact, the fever-ridden swamp Dickens depicted it.

Royalty Theatre

The school of the Stage Arrangements under the immediate Direction of
Mr. H. ROXBY BEVERLY.

MONDAY, May 26, 1823, and during the Week

MUTINY OF THE
BRITANNIA
Or, THE PERILS OF A SAILOR.

The Piece Written by Mr. BRYANT; arranged, got up, and Produced by Mr. H. ROXBY BEVERLY.

Admiral Hillyard, Mr. MUSGRAVE. Captain Wilmot, (Commander of the Britannia,) Mr. GALLOTT.
Lieutenant Adams, (an Officer under his command,) Mr. GOMERSAL. Joseph Van Drunkenhoff, (a Dutch Burgomaster,) Mr. BISHOP.
Simon Paulschein, (a Cockney Traveller from Doctors' Commons,) Mr. WYATT. Gregory Hardbrook, (Superintendant of a Festival,) Mr. T. KILL.
Tinsall, (Landlord of the Hope and Anchor,) Mr. MARQUIS. Hodge, Mr. SAKER.
Sam Larboard, (a discharged Boatswain,) Mr. H. ROXBY BEVERLY.
Jim Hartnell, Sampson Willman, Joe Jonk, Ben Swivel, & Harry Halcmast, (Sailors on board the Britannia,) Messrs. MOSS, WATKINS, DIRK, LINCH, & SCRIVES.
Edmund Harcourt, (an English Settler in Bachelors,) Mr. WOOLF. Peter O'Slattery, (an Irish Fisherman, resident in Bachelors,) Mr. BRYANT.
Mrs. Mrs. ISAACS. Ben, Mr. JONES. Penthey, Mr. TURNER. Mariners, Marines, Sailors, Indians, &c. &c.
Emily Wilmot, (Wife to the Captain,) Miss PRICE. Phoebe, Miss EDWARDS.
Mistress O'Slattery, (Wife to the Irish Fisherman,) Miss AINSLIE. Kathleen, (her Niece,) Mrs. GOMERSAL. Sandie, (a black Girl,) Miss WILMOT.
Mrs. Jemima Ledgate Paulschein, (Widow of a deceased Alderman,) Mrs. SMITH.
Female Dancers, Villagers, &c. &c.

Principal Dancers - - - - Mrs. H. Roxby Beverly, Miss Bennet, Miss E. Holland, Mr. Brenton, and Master Hunt.

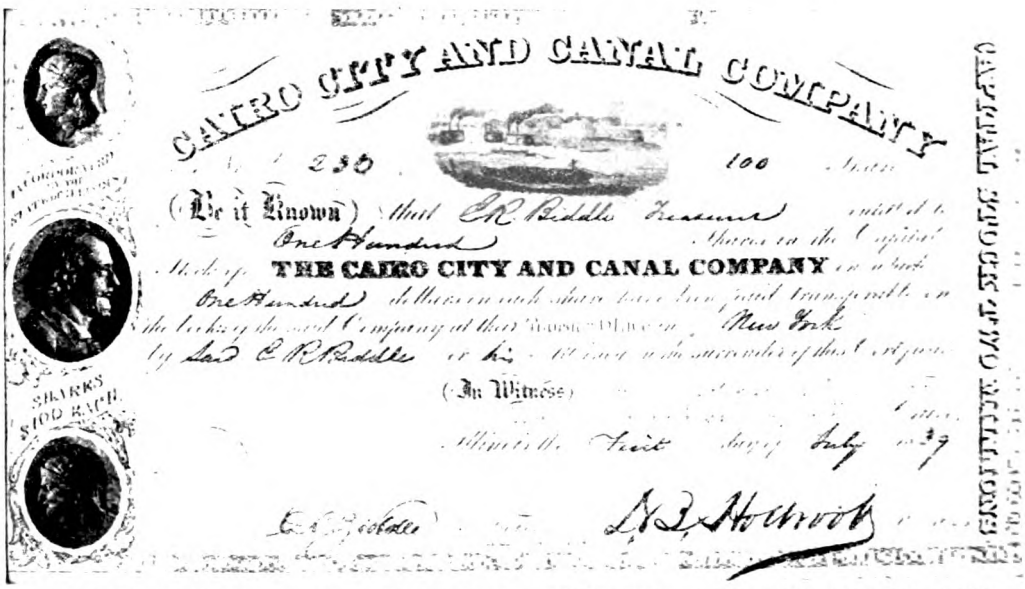
The Stage has been considerably enlarged, for the express purpose of introducing one of the most stupendous pieces of Machinery ever exhibited on the British Stage, namely, an

ENGLISH SHIP of WAR

Completely rigged, manned, gunned, and in every particular fully appointed and prepared by Shipwrights from the various Dock Yards, who have been for months employed in building and rigging her. This Vessel alone cost the Proprietor more than Three Hundred Guineas.

Ceremony of Crossing the Line. The Britannia observed Sinking.
The RAFT Floating on the Atlantic. Arrival of the INDIAN FLEET.

3.—THE UNIQUE PLAYBILL OF "THE MUTINY OF THE BRITANNIA," REFERRED TO BY DICKENS IN "MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS."



4.—ONE OF THE ONLY TWO BONDS KNOWN TO BE IN EXISTENCE OF THE CAIRO CITY AND CANAL COMPANY. CAIRO WAS IMMORTALIZED BY DICKENS AS EDEN CITY IN "MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT."

The Clothes and the Man.

By MABEL LODER STEARNS.

Illustrated by F. Wright.

CLEVERING had gone to take bearings again from the other side of the island. He was so long about it this time that Deane grew uneasy. Now, at last, he appeared over the low ridge of dunes that divided it and came hurriedly forward. He seemed nervous and excited, it seemed to the man in the salt-stained clerical waistcoat.

"Anything in sight?" he asked, hopefully.

"Not a blamed thing! Not a sign of a sail anywhere," returned Clevering, bluntly. "It's the very deuce, too, climbing over those dunes. Don't you try it, parson," he added, quickly, almost anxiously; "they would put your lame ankle out of business in a minute."

"I wasn't thinking of it, I assure you," Deane answered, grimly. "No; Miss Bradshaw and I will have to take your word for it. You are as much interested as we are."

The girl did not seem to hear. She sat mute and wide-eyed, her hands tightly clasped in her lap, her gaze fixed on the cruel white line of surf at her feet, creeping nearer and nearer like a hungry beast stealing upon its prey.

Clevering dropped upon the sand beside her.

"There is no hope of a rescue?" she asked at last.

"None, I am afraid. You see, nothing but a fog would bring a ship near these shoals, and the fog that threw us off our course has lifted."

"How long have we?"

"An hour, possibly; not longer than that. The tide is rising rapidly; when it has reached its height—well, then there will be no island, that is all."

The girl shuddered.

"It is awful to die like this, without even a chance," she said, piteously; "to feel that God has saved us once from that terrible sea, only to let it strangle us in the end. Why didn't He let us drown with the rest? It would have been more merciful, I think."

"As it is," returned Clevering, softly, "He has given us this hour's reprieve, and I am going to ask you to give it to me, Faith."

"Give it to you? What do you mean?" asked the girl, wonderingly.

"I want you to marry me."

"*Marry* you! Here? Now?" Amazement for the moment swept all other feeling aside.

"Yes. I would like to die knowing that you belong to me."

"But why? I don't understand," the girl said. "I don't love you, Mr. Clevering. Why should you want to marry me when—when everything will so soon be over for us both?"

"Because it would mean everything to me, when the end came, to know that you bore my name. I ask nothing more than that," he added, quickly. "I will not even kiss you afterward, if you so decree it."

"I should so wish it, certainly," the girl answered, decidedly. "But it is not that alone—there is so much in one's last hour to think about, so much to try to understand and be sorry for."

"I appreciate that, and I will not intrude upon your thoughts," Clevering promised, eagerly. "You shall have the hour to yourself—only let me be near you, with the joy of knowing you are my wife."

The girl stirred restlessly in her perplexity and distress. There seemed to her an element of selfishness, almost of cowardice, in the man's persistence—as if he were seeking protection rather than giving it. Yet she liked Clevering, and had seen much of him during the long voyage across the Pacific.

From the first he had shown his devotion to her, but when he had asked for her love in return she had gently told him it was impossible. What she had not added was that the one man in all the world who could have it did not want it.

But that was during the voyage, when life, with all its wonderful possibilities, was still

"BEING POSSESSED OF NEITHER PRAYER-BOOK NOR MEMORY, APPARENTLY, DEANE PERFORMED THE CEREMONY MOST AWKWARDLY."

before her. Now, with inevitable death staring them in the face, what did it matter? she thought, wearily. Had she the right to refuse this man when it meant so much to him? In her overwrought state it seemed to her like denying a last request of the dying.

"It is for such a little while," pleaded Clevering. "To you it can make no possible difference—to me it is everything. Cannot you grant me this one hour of happiness?"

The girl was silent for a moment, and then, turning a white, exalted face toward him, she said, slowly:—

"If—if what you ask is all, then, and it means so much to you, it shall be as you wish."

Clevering caught her hand in his.

"I can die happy now!" he cried,

Being possessed of neither prayer-book nor memory, apparently, though quite willing to oblige them, Deane performed the ceremony most awkwardly. His twisted ankle prevented his standing, so that Faith and Clevering were forced to kneel uncomfortably on the wet sand. But to Faith's infinite relief it was all over in a few moments.

With a face of triumph Clevering turned toward her.

"My wife!" he said, exultantly.

There was a certain hardness in the tone that grated on the girl's sensitive nerves. She would have shrunk from a caress from this man, but the lack of tenderness—of deep feeling—in his voice surprised and repelled her.

Abruptly she turned from him.

"I should like to be alone for a little while," she said, coldly.

"As you please," answered Clevering, readily. "In the meantime I will have another look at the tide."

Seating herself on the sand Faith tried to think, but her brain seemed in a whirl. Why this unaccountable horror for what she had done, and why, oh, why did her thoughts persistently turn to the one man whom she longed to forget—who could have had her love, and who had not cared enough even to wish her God-speed on her voyage?

From the waste of waters before her her eyes turned hopelessly to the little island that had given them such treacherous sanctuary.

Near her, staring apathetically before him, sat the man in black. She wondered dully what his thoughts were, and whether death held any terrors for him now that the teachings of his cloth must be put to the test in himself. Somehow he seemed almost ludicrously shorn of his priestly dignity without his clerical coat, from which he had freed himself in the water. She had not known him well on the steamer—a reserved, solitary man, he had mingled but little with the other passengers.

Idly she slipped her hand into the deep pocket of her raincoat, which she had hastily thrown on over her thin dress at the first warning of disaster on the steamer. It was the first time she had had it on, she remembered, since the day she sailed, when it had rained quite hard. In the pocket her fingers came in contact with something wet and pulpy. Letters!

Like a flash it came to her. Some had been given her just as she was leaving for the steamer, and she had thrust them into this pocket, only to forget them later, in the hurry and confusion of departure. Could one of them have been from——?

Tremblingly she drew them forth. There were several of them, all for the most part illegible from their soaked and blurred condition. But one was better preserved than

the others, no doubt from its having been at the very bottom of the deep rubber pocket.

One glance at the handwriting of the address, then, with a wildly-beating heart, she opened it and read :—

MY DEAREST FAITH,—My mother's sudden illness makes it impossible for me to see you before you sail, but I cannot let you go without telling you how I love you. I have only this hurried moment, but I am hoping the orchids I am sending to the steamer for you will tell you the rest, until I can write again. May God bless and protect you! JACK.

For a moment, in the flood of happiness that seemed to envelop her, the girl forgot her marriage—forgot everything but that the one man in all the world loved her! Then a louder, more insistent boom of the waves brought her to herself and a cognizance of the hideous death before her.

And he could now never even know that she loved him! Never——

Desperately she looked out over the mocking sea, for the first time realizing in all its horror the fate awaiting her.

At that moment there came the sound of men's excited voices and hurrying feet across the sand. What could it mean?

Dazed, she turned to meet the outstretched hands of—her husband!

"A ship, Faith; a ship!" he cried, hoarsely.

She stared at him uncomprehendingly, and then a mad joy tore at her heart. A ship meant that she should see Jack and——

Again Clevering held out his hands to her.

"My wife!" he said, with that same gloating triumph. "My wife, and we are saved!"

His wife! and Jack loved her! Heavens!

Then sea and sky and land became one confused blur, and the next instant the girl was lying senseless at Clevering's feet.

Several hours later, weak and spent from her long swoon and the terrible ordeal through which she had passed, Faith lay back among the pillows of a steamer chair on the deck of the *White Peacock*. Against the railing near her lounged Clevering.

Presently the captain of the ship joined them.

"Feeling a little more fit, miss?" he asked.

The girl nodded, trying to smile.

"I tell you, sir," the captain went on, turning to Clevering, "we were mighty glad to see your answering signal, and know we were not too late."

"*Answering* signal?" queried the girl, sharply. "What do you mean?"

"Why, you see, as soon as I could after we were thrown up on the beach, I tied my handkerchief to a stick, as a signal, and left it sticking in the sand in case anything did come in sight," explained Clevering, easily.

"Was that what *you* meant, captain?" the girl persisted, raising her startled eyes searchingly to the captain's now puzzled face.

"Why, no," he said, slowly. "I meant after that, when you *returned* our signal, Mr. Clevering. It must have seemed to you a deuce of a long wait, but as bad luck would have it the boat sprang a leak when half-way to the island, and the boys had to put back for another. It must have been fully an hour before they finally reached you."

An hour! And it could have been scarcely twenty minutes before the actual rescue that Clevering had first asked her to marry him.

"Well, all's well that ends well, and a good night's sleep ought to straighten you all out," added the captain, genially, as he passed on.

Even Clevering quailed before the white light of scorn that blazed in the girl's beautiful eyes as she turned them full upon him.

"So you *knew*, then," she said, quietly, in cold, even tones, her slender fingers closing on the arms of her chair until her nails turned blue; "knew, when you asked me to marry you, that we would be rescued?"

"And if I did?" Clevering asked, defiantly. "Was I not justified? Surely all is fair in love——"

"Stop!" commanded the girl, imperiously. "Don't you presume to use that word to me. Love! *You!* I never want to see your face again!" she cried, passionately.

"That is unfortunate, truly, since we are legally married," returned Clevering, coolly. "Come, come, Faith"—with an assumption of lightness—"don't make a tragedy of all this! You will think differently of it by and by, and no doubt will be very happy with me. I'm not such a bad sort, after all, even if I did win you by the only available means. Anyway, it can't be helped now, you know, so you must try to make the best of it."

The girl turned from him with loathing.

"I shall never live with you, Mr. Clevering," she said, firmly.

Clevering gave a slight shrug.

"Perhaps the law will have something to say about that," he answered, deliberately. "I have given you no reason to divorce me."

"You mean that the law would force me to live with you?"

"It would recognize my just rights, certainly. You seem to forget that you are my legal wife."

The girl stared at him with frightened eyes.

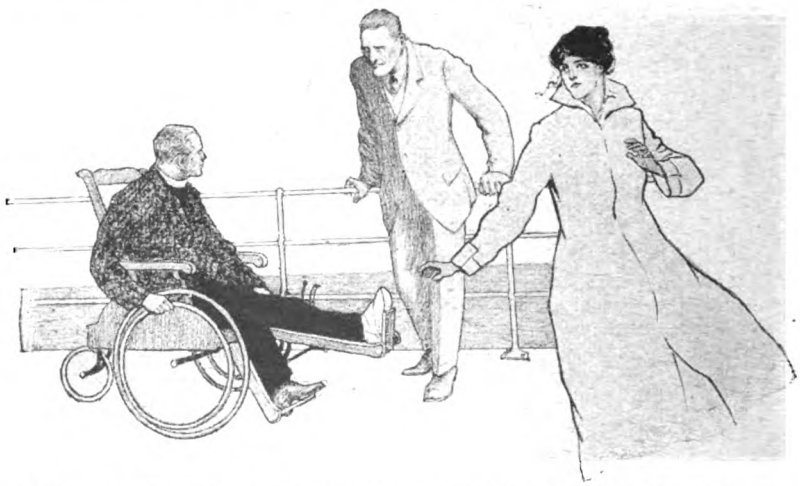
She was very young, very inexperienced, and very ignorant of the world.

"I trust, however, that such means will not be necessary," pursued Clevering, virtuously. "I prefer to win you by the strength of my love, not by force; but win you I must, for I cannot live without you."

As he spoke his thoughts dwelt gloatingly on the newspaper cutting that had determined him to take this voyage. It was merely the announcement that after the settlement upon her of her late uncle's enormous estate Miss Faith Bradshaw would sail on the s.s. *Orient*, November 12th, for Japan, where she would join her cousins, Major and Mrs. Arnold Barton, for the winter.

The chances of success had been small, but the stakes had been high, and he had won! The girl and her money were his!

The sound of wheels coming slowly along the deck broke in upon these pleasant reflections. It was Mr. Deane, propelling himself laboriously toward them in an old wheeled chair, his bandaged ankle comfortably supported by the broad foot-rest in front.



"'I'M NO END SORRY,' HE REPEATED, APOLOGETICALLY, 'BUT I KNOW THE PARSON ON BOARD HERE WILL BE GLAD TO FIX IT UP FOR YOU.'"

Clevering muttered an oath. What did the ass want, anyway?

"I am glad of this opportunity to speak to you two together," Deane began, a trifle awkwardly. "I have something to tell you."

"What is it?" asked Faith, wearily. She wished he would go away—she must think.

"Well, only that you will have to get this marriage business done over again," answered Deane, bluntly.

"What do you mean?" demanded Clevering, angrily.

"Just that. I am sorry, but, you see, the clothes don't always make the man, and this is one of the times when they don't. I am no more a parson than you are. Fact is, I'm a detective, but I sometimes find a parson's make-up as good as any other to shadow a man in—that is, until he goes to the bottom of the sea—then I suppose a diver's outfit would have been more to the point.

"Well, when I saw how keen you were on being married on that island I thought it an awful pity not to accommodate you, seeing that we were all going to the bottom inside of an hour, as we thought. You would both die happy, I reasoned, and no harm done—though I can tell you I was up against it when it came to the formula. Now, of course, it is different, and I feel bound to explain things at once."

Then he stared in amazement at Faith Bradshaw's radiant face. Women certainly were the limit! Anyone would suppose now that he had done her a good turn in telling her her marriage wasn't any good.

White to the lips, Clevering glared at him with positive menace. Deane eyed him uneasily.

"I'm no end sorry," he repeated, apologetically, "but I know the parson on board here—he's the genuine article, you understand—will be glad to fix it up for you."

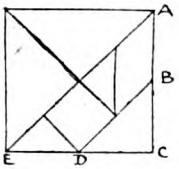
"Thank you just as much, Mr. Deane," the girl said, coolly, "but I think now that I will not be married until I return to San Francisco."

WAR TANGRAMS

BY HENRY E. DUDENEY.

We shall be pleased to offer a Prize of Ten Guineas for the best design sent in by any of our readers, composed of not more than four tangrams—*i.e.*, twenty-eight pieces in all. Address, "Tangrams" Editor, STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, not later than October 8th.

TANGRAMS, as our readers are aware, are the seven variously-shaped pieces of paper, wood, or other material which are obtained by the cutting-up of a square in the manner shown in the first of the following designs. Mark the point B midway between A and C, and D midway between C and E, and the direction of the cuts is readily seen. The following pictures, illustrating some nonsense rhymes on the Great War, will serve to show that the possibilities of grotesque characterization to be obtained from the grouping of those seven angular pieces of black cardboard are illimitable. Every separate letter in the title, and every figure, article, and machine of war, is constructed out of those seven pieces. One set has been used throughout, with the exception that all the bombs and shells in the final battle picture are constructed from a smaller set. It does no violence to the imagination to note that the clerk, the desk, and the seat in Nos. 5, 6, 7, each cover exactly the same area, but it seemed a little too extravagant to represent a shell as exactly the same size as the whole gun from which it is fired. It should also be pointed out that the colonel on horseback, No. 55, is composed of two sets.



Every picture is a puzzle, if you cut out your set of tangrams according to the directions and try to construct such pictures as strike your fancy. Some are particularly easy, but others will try the reader's patience for some time.

DOING HIS BIT.

It is a simple, artless tale
That I will now unfold
Of how a lad of Notting Dale (No. 2)
Became a warrior bold.

To tell you briefly
who I am,
I'm named John Henry
Dabbs,
Though nursemaids, when they
pushed my pram (Nos.
3-4)
Insisted I was "Babbs."

When I left school my father said,
"Now, sonny, get to work,"
And I was very promptly made
A common city "clurk" (Nos. 5-7).

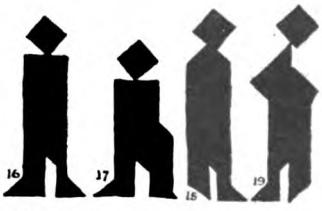
But, born to brave great
deeds and rigours,
It daily made me
sadder.
I felt a reptile, adding
figures—
A mere commercial
adder.

Although I had a body sound,
Of one thing I felt sure—
The end of all my daily round
Was spinal curvature (No. 8).

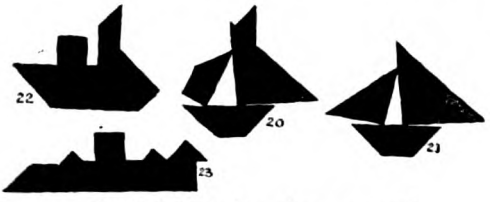
When war broke out, and Huns
broke in,
I seemed to hear a call,
And read, amid recruiting din,
The writing on the wall
(Nos. 9-14).

"Your King and Country need
you—you!"
The call was plain indeed.
What was there left for me to do
But just supply the need?

I went and asked a sergeant
gaunt (No. 15)
To put me in the ranks.
He said, "You're just the mak
we want.
We'll bung you in the Blanks."



I left the office from that night
For drilling out of doors.
I learnt my "'Shun," "Quick
march," "Eyes right,"
But mainly forming fours (Nos. 16-19).

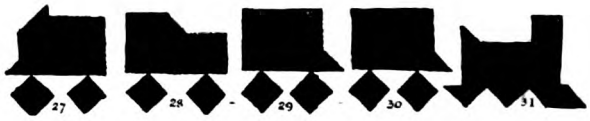


We hailed the day when we were fit
And ready for the fight,
Then off we went to do our bit
In transports of delight (Nos. 20-23).

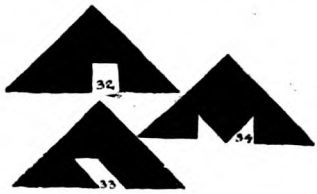
Though not good sailors, every lubber
Seemed downright glad to sail.
A submarine (No. 24) made one boy
blubber;
He thought it was a whale (No. 25).

But when torpedoes (No. 26) hove in
sight,
Our ship began to bustle.

She danced a tango, left and right,
And, my! it was some hustle.

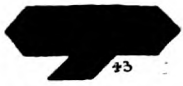


At length, by train (Nos. 27-31) we
reached our base,
And camped there for the
night (Nos. 32-34).
(I'm not allowed to name the place.
No doubt the Censor's right.)

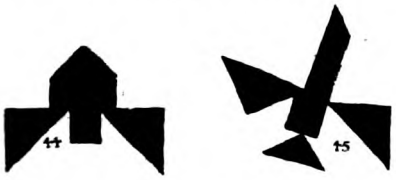


Next day we marched up to the front,
And passed a lot of Frenchies,
Until we got the order blunt
To occupy the trenches (Nos. 35-41).

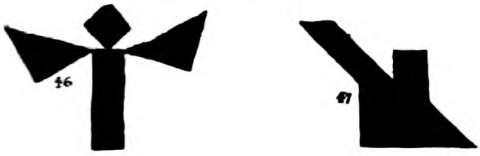
It took some doing, though, by gum,
Dodging those German
snipers (No. 42).
But never mind, the
day would come
When we'd remember
"Wipers."



I only saw one Zeppelin (No. 43),
But many an aeroplane (Nos. 44-45).
And, oh, it was an awful din
When bombs began to rain.



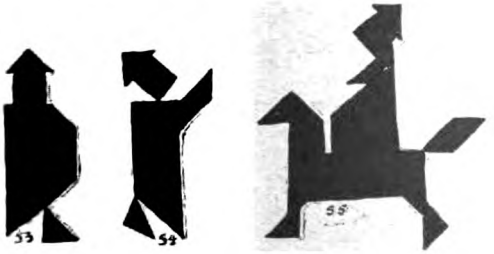
One day we hit an Albatross (No. 46)
With anti-aircraft gun (No. 47),
And suddenly there fell across
Our trench the pilot Hun.



How doth the gunner, one might say,
Delight to bark and bite.
He gathers Huns throughout the day,
And buries them at night (Nos. 48-50).

We found it rather dull, this keeping
Vigil in the trenches,
And in a dug-out sometimes sleeping
On rough wooden benches (Nos. 51-52).

The corporal, for a wager,
Told the sergeant 'twas infernal.
So the captain (No. 53) told the
major (No. 54),
And the major told the colonel (No. 55).



We'd get some fighting soon, they said,
The time was drawing near.
Meanwhile our men at football
played (Nos. 56-58)
A little in the rear.

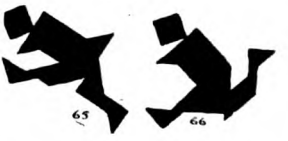
But all things come to those who wait
At "somewhere out in France,"
And soon began to circulate
A whisper of advance.

Then all our guns (Nos. 59-60) began
to play,
With shriek and roar and rattle,
And every Tommy knew that day
That it would be some battle.

The firing ceased all instantly,
And every man leapt out,
And dashed towards the
enemy (Nos. 61-64)
With yell and cry and shout.

And then the horrid game began.
It was a fearsome thing,
For every Tommy sought his man,
For Country and for King.

We made them from the trenches
fly (Nos. 65-66).
They fled without returning.
We cut them down with battle-cry
Of "Keep the Home Fires Burning!"



One squealed for mercy (No. 67), then
he tried
To stab me—just too late.
"A wife and children eight!" he cried.
I slew that "him of eight." (Nos. 68-69)

"You pig-dog!" with a wild grimace,
Shrieked out another hater,
And as he fell I saw his face—
An oft-tipped City waiter (No. 70).

An officer we held most dear
Got badly hit and fell.
I brought him safely to the
rear (Nos. 71-72)
Through rifle-shot and shell.

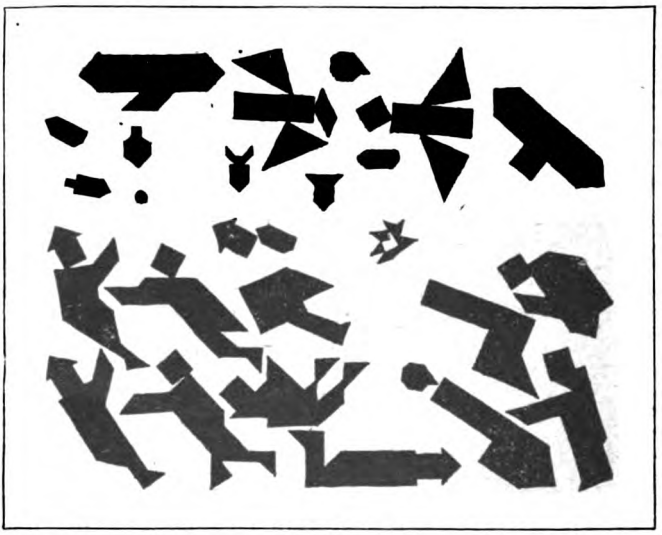
A bullet spoilt my beauty,
As anyone can see.
I only did my duty,
But they gave me the V.C.
(No. 73).

And now my fighting days are
o'er,
And I must settle down;
Perhaps on some Colonial shore,
Perhaps in London Town.

And as for Maudie (No. 74), she
just said,
"We'll marry when you're fit.
An English girl delights to wed
A man who's done his bit."

Yet I'm not happy, in a way,
And I will tell you why, sir;
I've downed some Germans in
my day,
But never met the Kaiser
(No. 75).

We give a picture of the actual battle-scene. It has been prepared from details supplied by the heroic Dabbs himself, so may be regarded as authentic. Its manner of treatment should appeal to all lovers of the art of the Cubist painter.



A BATTLE-SCENE IN THE CUBIST STYLE MADE WITH TANGRAMS.

King Lion's Advice.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Retold by W. J. L. Kiehl.

Illustrated by

J. A. SHEPHERD.

"FOR DAYS MR. MONKEY, THE KING'S SECRETARY, WAS BUSY WRITING OUT THE INVITATIONS."

ONCE upon a time King Lion wanted to give a big birthday party to which all his subjects were to be invited. For days Mr. Monkey, the King's secretary, was busy writing out the invitations, which were then carried round by the Hare, special courier to his Majesty. On his rounds Mr. Hare left six invitations for six close friends, all loyal subjects of King Lion, who dwelt together in perfect harmony in a village of six little cottages on the edge of a great forest. The names of these good friends were Mr. Cock, Mrs. Duck, Mrs. Cat, Mr. Dog, Mrs. Sheep, and Mr. Pig. The Royal notes caused quite a flutter in the small community; the friends flocked together and all talked at once.

"See! Here's an invitation from his Majesty! And here is mine, and mine! What an honour! What a good king he is to think of us all like this, and not a bit proud either! See what nice letters he's sent us!"

When the excitement quieted down somewhat, the Duck, being the eldest, took the word.

"Of course, we must accept the Royal invitation," she said.

"Of course," echoed Mr. Dog; "and as it's rather a long journey through the forest we had better begin to prepare for it at once. It will certainly take us about two days to reach the palace."

"Two days!" interjected Mr. Pig. "Rather say three, for we mustn't walk very fast, or we shall be too tired to enjoy the birthday feast."

The other friends winked knowingly at one another, for Piggy's laziness and gluttony were matters of plenty of good-natured chaff among them.

After some more talk it was decided that they would all set out the very next morning about half an hour before sunrise. Mrs. Cat inquired how they would be able to tell the time.

"Just leave that to me," said Mr. Cock. "I'm always awake at dawn, in plenty of time to greet the rising sun with my cheery chant."

Everyone agreed to this, and the friends parted for the night to busy themselves in their own homes with preparations for the momentous journey. From sheer excitement Mr. Cock woke even earlier than usual the next morning. He

"SEE, HERE'S AN INVITATION FROM HIS MAJESTY! AND HERE IS MINE, AND MINE! WHAT AN HONOUR!"

flew to the roof of his hut and shouted at the top of his voice, "Cock-a-doodle-do! Cock-a-doodle-do!" Immediately the doors of four cottages opened wide, but Piggy's dwelling remained tightly closed. Again Mr. Cock crowed and crowed, but no sound or movement came from the closed hut. Then the friends all shouted together, but nothing could wake Mr. Pig. Then Mrs. Sheep had an inspiration. She butted her head against the door again and again until it creaked in all its joints, and a disgusted grunt from the inner recesses of the hut revealed that Piggy was waking up. Soon after he appeared in the doorway, yawning prodigiously.

"Why can't you let a fellow sleep in peace?" he grunted.

"Ah! Mr. Lazybones," cried his friends, "have you forgotten all about the King's birthday?"

Only then did Piggy remember, and he bustled about as fast as he could to get ready. It did not take long before the six friends, each carrying some sandwiches for their midday lunch, started off towards the forest. Their dinner they hoped to get at the hospitable home of the forester, who, so they had heard, lived in the very centre of the wood, and was always kind to travellers. Just as they reached the forest the sun rose, throwing shafts of light among the great trees, so that it was very pleasant walking there. At noon they halted in a clearing and had a jolly little picnic with the sandwiches they had brought; then on again with renewed vigour. When darkness fell Mrs. Sheep, who was just a little bit of a coward, began to feel afraid, and tremblingly asked what they should do if they were to encounter any robbers.

"Oh," said Mr. Dog, "don't you be frightened, for if we do meet anyone I will bark so loudly that they are sure to run away as fast as they can. You just keep close to my side and I'll protect you. Soon the stars will be lighted, and then we shall be able to see our way again."

But no stars shone forth that night, for dense black clouds had covered the sky; it was impossible to see a step in advance, and after a while Mr. Dog announced that they had completely lost their way. Mrs. Sheep wept with nervous terror, and Mr. Pig loudly lamented that he was tired and hungry, and wouldn't go a step farther.

"Don't give up so soon," cried Mr. Cock. "I'll fly up into the top of a tall tree and see whether there is a light in the forester's house."

So up he flew, and when he stood on the topmost branch of the tallest tree he saw a light glimmering in the distance. Joyfully he announced his find, and with renewed courage they set out in its direction, led by wary Mrs. Cat, who could see pretty well in the dark. After a while they all saw the light, but it was clear that it did not shine from the forester's window, but from the doorway of a cave in the mountainside.

"Never mind," consoled Mr. Dog; "no doubt we'll find shelter there for the night just as well."

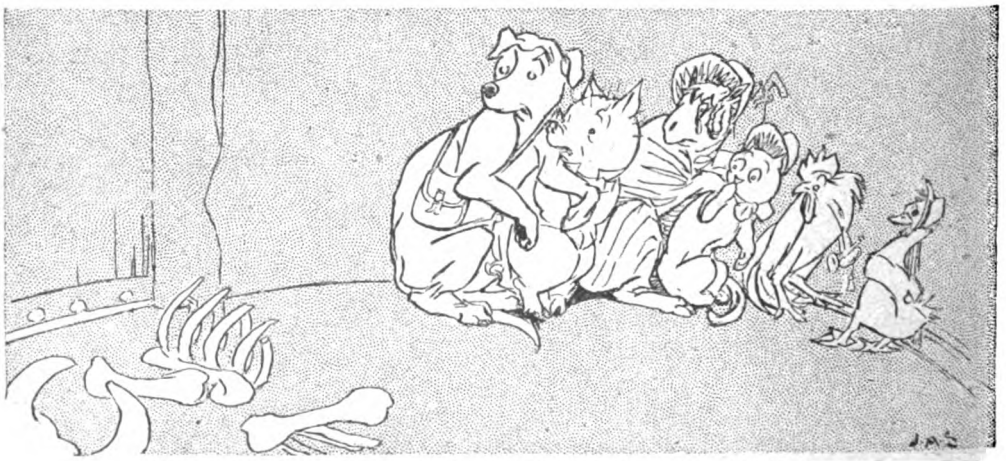
"And I hope they'll give us something to eat," grunted Mr. Pig, "for I'm faint with hunger."

They knocked, then waited, and knocked again, and when no one came they all entered unceremoniously. Scarcely, however, had Mr. Cock, who brought up the rear, passed in when—click! down came a trapdoor, and they found themselves prisoners in a large cave. Great was their consternation, especially when they discovered the skins of many animals and heaps of bones with the marks of sharp fangs upon them.

"Alas!" they cried, "we have strayed into the Tiger's den. Look at the remains of his poor victims!" And they all shuddered, thinking of the fate that might be in store for themselves.

Mr. Dog was the first to recover himself.

"Dear friends," he said, "we cannot allow ourselves to be trapped like this. I've just thought out a plan whereby we may not only save our own lives but rid the forest for ever of the cruel Tiger. Let us put out the light and hide ourselves in the nooks and corners of the



"'ALAS!' THEY CRIED, 'WE HAVE STRAYED INTO THE TIGER'S DEN.'"

cave; then when the Tiger comes home, sleepy and tired, we will fall upon him all together and never let go until he is dead."

"That's the thing!" cried Mr. Cock, who was always ready for a fight. "I'll give the signal for attack."

All agreed to the plan and hid themselves as best they might, timid Mrs. Sheep keeping close to bold Mr. Dog, while fearless Mrs. Cat sharpened her claws on the stump of an old tree. They had not very long to wait, for presently they heard a deep-throated roar, and Mr. Tiger came shuffling in. He had just eaten a whole goat, which was rather too much of a good thing even for him, so he felt bloated and uncomfortable and walked staggering like a drunkard.

"How hot it is in here!" he growled. "Better keep the door open," and he pressed his paw on a certain spring in the trapdoor so that it did not close. "How dark it is in here!" he muttered. "Now, where did I put those matches?"

Suddenly a loud "Cock-a-doodle-do!" resounded through the cave. This was the signal for attack, and before the Tiger knew what was happening Dog had flown at his throat, Cat and Cock jumped on his head, pecking and scratching at his eyes and nose, Piggy worried his tail, and Sheep and Duck, not knowing how otherwise to help their friends, set up such a bleating and quacking as might have wakened the Seven Sleepers themselves. In a few seconds all was over; Tiger lay dead upon the ground, and the six friends hastily left the ill-omened cave that had so nearly proved fatal to them.

Dawn was just breaking, but they had no idea which way they had to go to reach the Court. So they walked on slowly in the hope of meeting someone who could tell them. Soon they heard a great bluster, and Mr. Wind came tearing down the path.

"AS SOON AS HE SAW THE FRIENDS HE EXCLAIMED: 'WELCOME, MY FAITHFUL SUBJECTS, THRICE WELCOME TO MY BIRTHDAY PARTY.'"

"If you please, Mr. Wind," they cried, "can you tell us the way to King Lion's palace?"

But he passed them by in a whirl without vouchsafing any answer, snapping off the branches as he went.

"What an unpolite bully!" commented Mrs. Cat.

"Never mind," said Mrs. Duck; "here comes Mrs. Rain, as usual close behind Mr. Wind. Let us ask her."

They did so, but Mrs. Rain only sighed and wept copiously, wiping her eyes on the leaves of the trees and taking no notice at all of the weary travellers.

"She's as bad as Mr. Wind," said Piggy. "I wonder if everyone we meet is going to be as rude?"

Just then a pretty little Shepherdess with laughing blue eyes and sunny curls came tripping around a bend in the road. Mr. Cock strutted up to her.

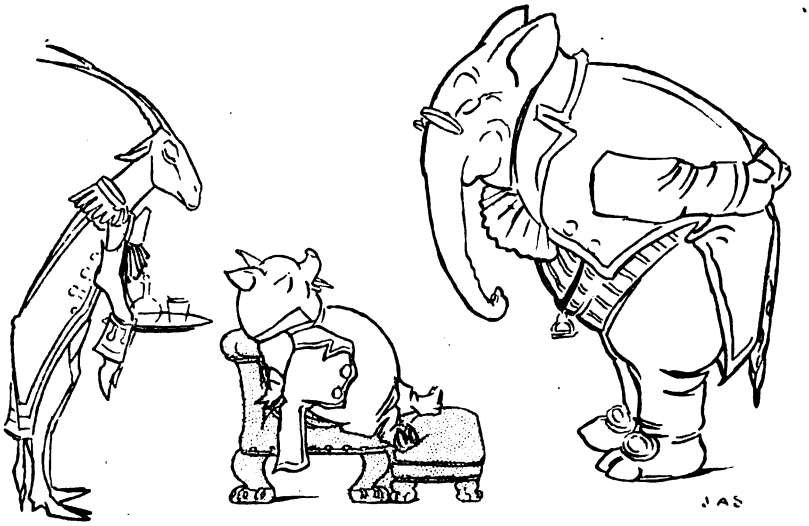
"Dear little Shepherdess," he said, in his most ingratiating manner, "can you show us the way to King Lion's palace?"

"That I can," replied the obliging little maid. "Look! Do you see that mountain there over the trees? The King's palace lies at its foot."

They thanked her kindly and hurried on, rejoicing that they were now so close to their goal. When they emerged from the wood they saw the splendid palace, all built of red granite, nestling at the foot of the mountain. In its gardens many fountains sprayed and gay-coloured flowers perfumed the air. As they came closer they saw troops of giraffes, gazelles, and squirrels, all servants of the Royal household, bustling about with gold and silver dishes and salvers, laden with choice viands for the Royal table.

"Ah!" grunted Piggy, contentedly sniffing the air, "I see we are in good time for the birthday feast."

As they entered they were met by the Master



"DOCTOR ELEPHANT ORDERED HIM TO BE PUT TO BED AT ONCE, AND PRESCRIBED NASTY, BITTER CAMOMILE-TEA TO CURE HIM."

of the Ceremonies and conducted straight to the Audience Chamber, where they found King Lion on his golden throne surrounded by a brilliant throng of courtiers. As soon as he saw the friends he exclaimed: "Welcome, my faithful subjects, thrice welcome to my birthday party!"

The friends bowed low before him and wished him many happy returns of the day. Then a blare of silver trumpets sounded, and the Lord High Steward announced that dinner was served. King Lion rose and everyone followed him into the banqueting-hall, where such a grand repast was spread as the guests had never seen in all their lives. To begin with, everyone was given the choice of the dish he liked best. Mr. Cock chose a plate of golden grain, Mrs. Cat was regaled with cream, while as for Mr. Pig, he declared he liked everything equally well and wanted something of everything on the table. He ate so greedily and such quantities of good things that all the others looked on in amazement.

After dinner the whole company adjourned to the ballroom, where King Lion graciously opened the ball with old Dowager-Duchess Hippopotamus. No one will be much surprised to hear that after the third dance Mr. Pig felt so ill that he had to be carried from the room, and Dr. Elephant ordered him to be put to bed at once, and prescribed nasty, bitter camomile-tea to cure him; but the other guests, who had not been such gluttons, danced and enjoyed themselves till the small hours of the morning. Everyone stayed at Court for another day, and by that time Piggy was all right again and as hungry as ever.

Before the six friends left King Lion made them recount all their adventures. He was much impressed with their bravery in delivering the forest from the ferocious Tiger, and gave them each a medal to commemorate the event. To wind up with he gave them the following good advice.

"My friends," he said, "never forget a deed of kindness that has been shown you. Remember that Wind and Rain took no notice of your request, but the little Shepherdess showed you the right way to my palace. Therefore you must always be grateful to her, and I recommend that you should always live in friendship with her and with all mankind."

The friends gave King Lion their solemn promise, and ever since that time little boys and girls have had no kinder companions than the dog, the cat, the cock, the sheep, the duck, and the pig.

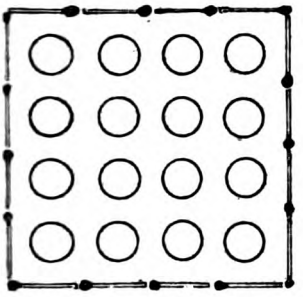
"SINCE THAT TIME LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS HAVE HAD NO KINDER COMPANIONS THAN THE DOG, THE CAT, THE COCK, THE SHEEP, THE DUCK, AND THE PIG."

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

375.—A NEW MATCH PUZZLE.

THE sixteen coins or counters are enclosed by sixteen matches. It is required to place an *odd* number of matches inside the square so as to enclose four groups of four coins each. There are obvious and easy ways of doing it with eight, ten, or twelve matches, but these are *even* numbers. Perhaps it will only take the reader a few minutes to discover the four distinctive ways (mere reversals and reflections not counting as different) of doing it with an odd number of matches. Of course, no duplicated matches are allowed.



376.—MRS. WILSON'S FAMILY.

AN Australian officer, somewhere in France, sends me the following little poser. Mrs. Wilson had three children, Edgar, James, and John. Their combined ages were half of hers. Five years later, during which time Ethel was born, Mrs. Wilson's age equalled the total of all her children's ages. Ten years more have now passed, Daisy appearing during that interval. At the latter event Edgar was as old as John and Ethel together. The combined ages of all the children are now double Mrs. Wilson's age, which is, in fact, only equal to that of Edgar and James together. Edgar's age also equals that of the two daughters. Can you find all their ages? My correspondent does not send the solution, but it works out quite prettily.

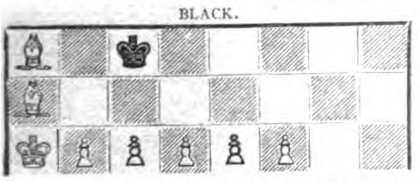
377.—A WORD SQUARE.

TRYING to do my *first* with grace, he said,
"Pray sit upon this *fifth* and take a rest.
Then from my *second* they will quickly bring
Some dainty, wholesome viands lately dressed."
She *fourths* herself with ease to the position,
And taking up his latest book she wonders
Whether the lengthy list of *third* within
Means printers' or the author's blunders.
"The printers'!" he exclaims, and in his rage
He *sixths* his name from off the title page.

The six words form a word square when properly put together in the order indicated by their numbers.

378.—AN OLD CHESS PUZZLE.

BLACK.



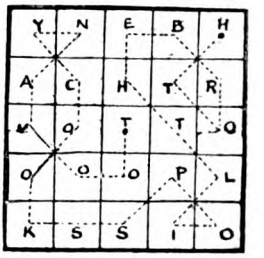
HERE is an old chess puzzle that is quite interesting and not very difficult. Its authorship is unknown. White has to play and checkmate the Black king without moving any one of the pawns. The actual number of moves in a puzzle of this kind is of no importance—it is a question of discovering the strategy—but I will say that it can be done in nineteen moves if Black makes the best fight possible, and, of course, in fewer if he puts up a weak defence. Part of the board is omitted merely to save space.

379.—AN ENIGMA.

How could I say to you in one word that you had some refreshment between nine and eleven?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

369.—A MOTTO PUZZLE.



IF you start at the central T and follow the dotted line throughout its route you will spell out the proverb, "Too many cooks spoil the broth."

370.—HOARDED GOLD.

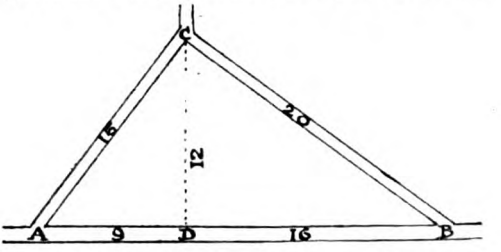
THERE must originally have been 1,021 sovereigns in the bag. The man placed 256 in box A, 192 in B, 144 in C, 108 in D, and had 321 remaining in the bag. Thus, there were 100 more sovereigns in A and C than in B and D.

371.—A DEFINITION.

A SILVER thimble.

372.—THOSE RUSSIAN CYCLISTS AGAIN.

THE diagram gives all the correct distances. All the general had to do was to square Pipipoff's 60 miles (3,600) and divide by twice the sum of that 60 and



Sliponsky's 12 miles—that is, by 144. Doing it in his head, he, of course, saw that this is the same as dividing 300 by 12, which at once gave him the correct answer, 25 miles, as the distance from A to B. I need not show how all the other distances are now easily obtained, if we want them.

373.—A REBUS.

"BE independent (B in D, pendent) but not too independent (2 in D, pendent)."

374.—A CHARADE.

BULL-RUSH.

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

ROLLER-SKATES FOR BUSINESS.

A NEW roller-skate with nine-inch wheels has been invented by Charles H. Clark, a mechanical engineer of New York, which he claims is intended more for business than pleasure. There are two of these large wheels on each foot, the front wheel placed on the inside of the foot and the rear one on the outside, so that no interference of the feet is possible. A pair of these skates weighs less than six pounds, as they are made of aluminium alloy. The wheels are ball-bearing and have pneumatic tyres, which eliminate any jar to the body when they are being used, and they are therefore practical for very long distances. A support made of tubing runs up on the inside of the leg, from the foot-rest to just above the ankle, for the purpose of relieving any strain that might come. The speed is equal to that of a bicycle, or about three

times the walking speed. A band-brake like that used on a motor-cycle, only on a small scale, regulates the speed of the skates. By a mere forward pressure of the foot the operator can slow down and bring himself to a complete stop.—Mr. L. M. Edholm, 68, West Ninety-seventh Street, New York City, U.S.A.

A STRANGE ILLUSION.

IN order to pose for a photograph the driver here shown pulled up by the trees, thinking they would make a good background. When the picture was finished, to his great surprise he found to all appearances that his right arm was outstretched and holding a

stick or whip, whereas in reality it was hanging in the proper military fashion by his side, the imaginary arm and stick being a dead branch of the tree. I think you will agree with me that it was singular that the horses should have been brought to a standstill at this spot and so produce this strange effect.—Mr. E. H. Streatfield, 16, Friern Road, Dulwich, S.E.22.

SOLUTION OF LAST MONTH'S BRIDGE PROBLEM.

TRICK 1.—A leads the five of diamonds; won by B.

TRICK 2.—B leads the six of diamonds; won by Y.

TRICK 3.—Y leads the four of clubs; won by A.

TRICK 4.—A leads the four of hearts; won by B with the queen.

TRICK 5.—B leads the best diamond (ace or knave, according to Y's play at Trick 1); Z cannot discard his winning heart or unguard the queen of spades, so he discards his last club; A discards the six of spades.

TRICK 6.—B leads the eight of hearts; won by Z.

TRICKS 7 AND 8 are won by A with the knave of spades and the last heart.

If at Trick 3 Y leads a diamond, A B lead club at Trick 4 and heart at Trick 5.

"ANIMALLOYS."

THE full list of names of the extraordinary birds and beasts shown last month under the above title is: 1, Motortoise; 2, Grand Pianorang; 3, Shellephant; 4, Zeppelynx; 5, Pelicanvil; 6, Buffaloco; 7, Hippopotomustard; 8, Cobracket; 9, Banjopossum; 10, Canouzel; 11, Mandolinnet; 12, Cockatoothbrush.

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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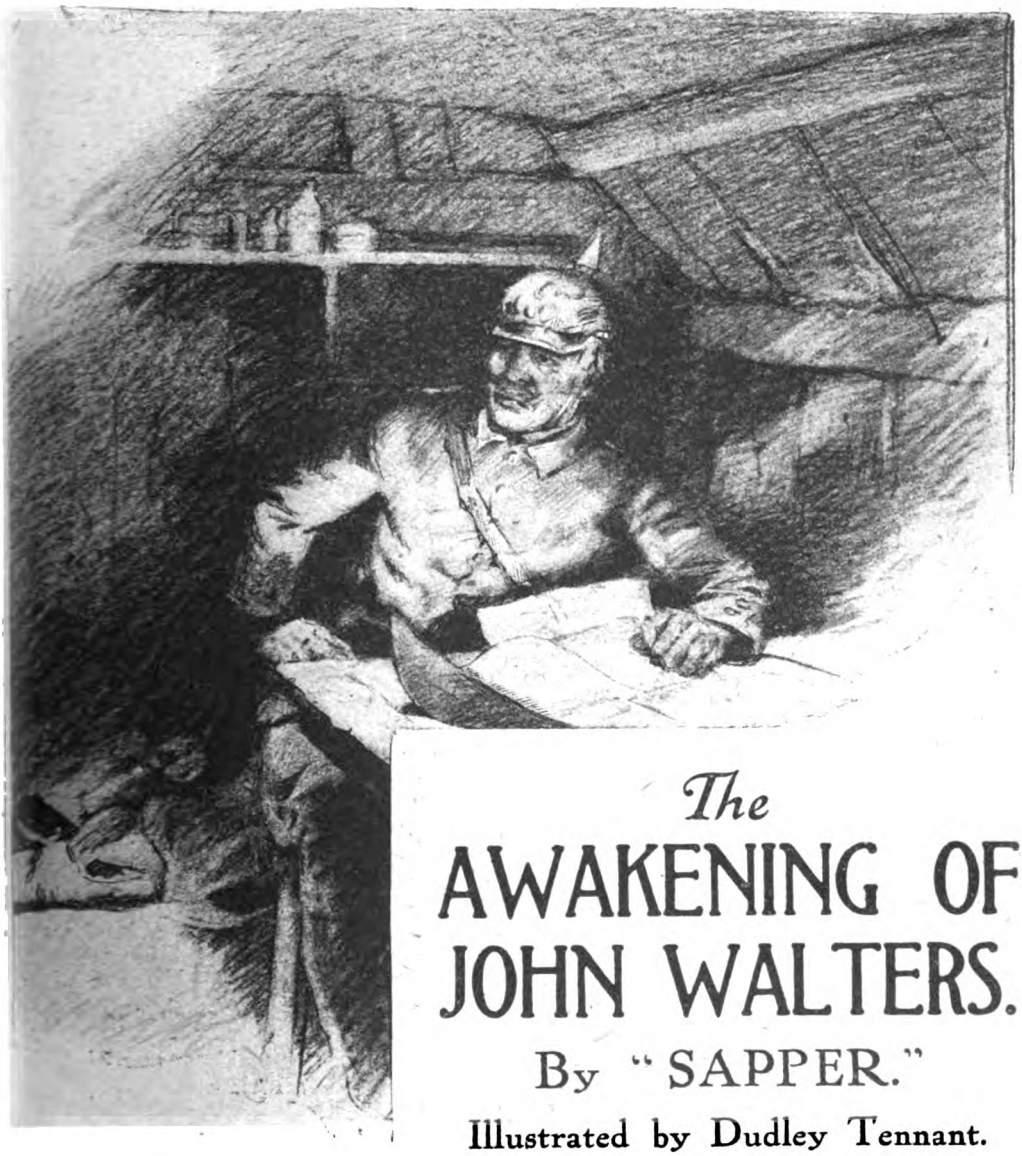
"AT LAST, HALF SOBBING WITH EXHAUSTION AND PAIN, HE WAS PROPELLED FORCIBLY INTO ANOTHER DUG-OUT, WHERE BEHIND A TABLE LIT BY CANDLES THERE SAT A MAN STUDYING A MAP."

(*See page* 423.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 54. NOVEMBER, 1917. No. 323.



The AWAKENING OF JOHN WALTERS.

By "SAPPER."

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

SHOULD you ever wander round the ranks of the North Sussex and inspect the faces of the men in that celebrated battalion, you will find that the majority are of the type bovine. They are a magnificent, if a stolid crowd, and their fighting record is second to none; but as might be expected in a regiment recruited largely from those who have been born and bred on the land, the prevalent expression of countenance is wooden. And in the rear rank of Number Three Platoon—at least that is where he used to exist beautifully—you will find the winner of the competition.

John Walters—the individual to whom I refer—was a great specimen of a man as

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far as his physical development was concerned; with regard to his brain the less said the better. Moreover, he looked it. He viewed life philosophically, if he viewed it at all; and the only thing which had ever been known to stir him into the slightest semblance of excitement was the unexpected addition of three more to his already numerous family circle. But the strain of endeavouring to work out the increase in separation allowance that this would give to the painstaking Mrs. John proved too much for him, and with only the briefest of struggles he relapsed once again into his normal torpor.

My story is of the awakening which came to our friend on a certain hot day in June. It was not permanent—he is now as comatose as ever—but while it lasted I am given to understand it was quite a useful performance. And this was the way of it, on that morning in early summer.

For our scenery we must go to the front-line trenches in a certain district where mine craters grew and multiplied, and saps crept out, turning and twisting between the thrown-up mounds of earth on each side of them. In some places they were only ten yards apart—the English and the German sapheads—in others they were a hundred. But over the whole area there brooded that delightful sense of doubt and uncertainty which goes so far in cheering up its happy occupants. Complete ignorance as to where the next mine is going off, coupled with absolute certainty that it will go up somewhere, and that as far as you can see it's about your turn for attention, is a state of affairs at which only the most blue-faced pessimist could cavil.

And quite in agreement with that opinion was our friend John Walters on the morning of the day in question. At least it appeared so. To the casual observer the worthy John was quite content with his position; and if the thought ever crossed his mind that mines frequently went up in unexpected places, or that the saphead he was adorning was only fifteen yards away from the nearest Hun one, it certainly was not reflected on his face.

Far from it. At the rise of the curtain he was lying sprawled on his back, and staring stolidly upwards.

He had been similarly occupied for the last hour, apathetically watching the stars pale gradually away, and the faint glow of dawn come stealing over the sky. Had he chosen to raise himself a little and look towards the East he could have seen the sun glistening like a gigantic orange ball, glinting through the thick white ground mist that covered everything; a sun that as yet had no heat in it. But John Walters did not choose to; he was quite comfortable, even if a little cold; and his mind was quite blank of any desire to do anything so energetic. Had anyone told him that this was the dawn of the most eventful day of his life, he would have contemplated the speaker without interest, spat with violence, and remarked in the fullness of time, "'Oo be you a-gettin' at?"

After a while he shifted his position and ceased to gaze at the deepening blue above his head. He felt in each pocket in turn until he found an unpleasant-looking clay pipe whose bowl he carefully inspected. Apparently satisfied with what he saw he produced from another pocket a piece of plug tobacco and a knife; and having performed the mystic rite with due care and solemnity, he thoughtfully rubbed the tobacco between his hands and stuffed his pipe with a square and dirty forefinger. Shortly after the blue spirals of smoke ascending in the still summer air proclaimed that John was having his matutinal pipe.

Occasionally when he thought about it his eyes rested on a little piece of looking-glass on a stick set into a sand-bag in front of him—a glass tilted at an angle of forty-five degrees, which reflected the ground behind his back. It was the periscope at the end of the sap, and John was the sentry whose duty it was to look through it. Facing him the sap ran back to the English front line. He could see the men asleep where it joined the trench twenty yards away—the others of the sap party; and occasionally he could see men going backwards and forwards in the fire-trench. He settled himself more comfortably, and again the smoke curled upwards in the motionless air, while John ruminated on life.

Far be it from me to blame our friend for thus indulging in a little quiet introspection, aided and soothed by My Lady Nicotine. The occupation has much to commend it at suitable times and in suitable places. Unfortunately, the head of a sap on the flank of a continuous line of craters at five o'clock on a misty morning fulfils neither of these conditions. Further, there seems to be but little doubt that the review of his life was of such surprising dullness that the worthy John's head fell forward three or four times with that peculiar movement seen so often amongst those who are known as earnest church-

goers. It occurs at intervals throughout the sermon, to be followed instantly by a self-conscious glance round to see if anyone saw. Only there was no one at the moment to see John, when his head first dropped slowly forward and his pipe fell unheeded to the ground—no one, that is, of whom our friend had any cognizance. But had his eyes been riveted on the periscope he would have seen a thing which would have galvanized even him into some semblance of activity.

Slowly, stealthily, a head was raised from behind a great hummock of chalky earth, a head surmounted by the round cloth cap of the German. Motionless the man stared fixedly at the little periscope—John's little periscope—then as if worked by a string the head disappeared; and when our hero, waking with a start, looked at the periscope himself with the guilty feeling that he had actually dozed on his post, once again it merely reflected the desolate, torn-up ground. But the German had seen John—and John had not seen the German, which is a dangerous state of affairs for solitary people in No Man's Land, when the range is about five yards.

It was just as our friend grunted and leaned forward to retrieve his pipe that it happened. Suddenly the saphead seemed to swarm with men who leaped into it out of the silent mists; a bullet-headed man seized John by the collar and yanked him out; the rest of the party seized the Mills bombs lying at the saphead, threw them at the sleeping picket near the fire-trench, and followed John's captor. In four seconds it was all over; the bombs burst in quick succession right amongst the picket, and when an infuriated and excited officer came rushing up to find out what the devil was the matter, the only traces that remained were two dead men, a lance-corporal with a large hole in his leg, and—John Walters's unpleasant-looking clay pipe.

There is little doubt that the next few minutes in our friend's life were crowded. Stumbling, half-running, and ever conscious of a large and ugly revolver pointed at his stomach, he was driven over the uneven ground for twenty yards or so, and then without warning he tripped up and fell into a trench which he found in front of him, followed almost immediately by four panting Huns, who mopped their brows and grunted in a strange tongue. John was still completely bemused—the whole thing had been so sudden—and he sat for a while staring at the Germans.

"Gaw lumme!" he remarked at last, scratching his head in perplexity, "if you ain't the ruddy 'Uns. This 'ere's a fair box-up—that's wot it is."

Almost mechanically his right hand wandered to his jacket pocket in search of his pipe, only to receive a crashing blow on the elbow from a revolver butt.

"'Ere—wot are you a-playing at?" His tone was aggrieved. "Danged if I ain't left my pipe in that there sap."

"English swine." One of the Germans spoke slowly, choosing his words with care. "You will later killed be."

"Go hon." John regarded him unmoved—he was still thinking about his pipe. "And look 'ere, guv'nor, I ain't 'ad no breakfast."

The German shook his head—our friend's accent was beyond him. Then seeming to realize that he was failing to hate sufficiently, he brought the butt of his rifle down with great force on John's foot, and drove him along the sap with the point of his bayonet. The procession turned along the fire-trench—once again John tripped up; something hit him on the head, he felt himself falling down a timbered shaft, and then—no more.

Now the usual course of procedure when a man is taken prisoner is to remove him with all possible speed to the rear, where he can be examined at leisure by men who know his language. At least, it is so in the case of German prisoners, and it is to be assumed it is so in the case of ours. Therefore our friend can deem himself lucky—though he certainly did not think so at the time—that the usual procedure was not followed in his case. Had it been, this more or less veracious narrative would never have been written; and our worthy John would even now be languishing in Ruhleben or some equally choice health resort.

He was roused from a sort of semi-stupor by a heavy kick in the ribs; and for a moment his mind was a blank—more even than usual. He was painfully aware that his head was very sore, and his stomach was very empty; and after he had completely grasped those two unpleasant facts he became further and even more painfully aware that a stoutly-booted German was on the point of kicking him again. He scrambled groaning to his feet; memories of the saphead had returned. The German pointed to the dug-out shaft; and when John again began remarking on the little matter of breakfast the stoutly-booted foot struck another portion of his anatomy even more

"SUDDENLY THE SAPHEAD SEEMED TO SWARM WITH MEN WHO LEAPED INTO IT OUT OF THE SILENT MISTS."

heavily. Our hero, perceiving that the subject was unpopular, and encountering for the first time in his life the doctrine of *force majeure*, reluctantly began to climb the shaft. A bayonet prodded into the region of the last kick, and having let forth a howl, he climbed less reluctantly.

When he at last emerged blinking into the daylight of the trench, he looked, as is the way with those who are of the earth earthy, at the sun; and found to his surprise that it was late in the afternoon.

"Lumme, guv'nor!"—he turned to the man behind him—"I ain't 'ad nothin' to eat all day. Not since last night, I ain't, an' then a perisher dropped me bread in the trench and trod on it."

His guard gazed at him impassively for a moment, and then kicked him quiet again—in the stomach this time—while two men sitting on the fire-step laughed gutturally.

"English swine!" One of them mockingly held out a piece of bread, and then snatched it away again, as John was about to take it.

"Swine, yer ruddy self," he snarled, his slow bucolic temper beginning to get frayed.

But a rifle-butt in the ribs and a bayonet half an inch in his back showed him the unwisdom of such a proceeding; and he stumbled sullenly along the trench. It was lightly held, but everyone whom he did see seemed to take a delight in finding some hitherto unbruised part of his body to hit. At last, half sobbing with exhaustion and pain, he was propelled forcibly into another dug-out, where behind a table lit by candles there sat a man studying a map. He felt a hand like a leg of mutton seize him by the collar, force him upright, and then hold him motionless. After a few moments the man by the table looked up.

"What is the number of the battalion you belong to?" He spoke in perfect English.

"The Sixth." John's spirits rose at hearing his own language. "An', look 'ere, guv'nor, I ain't 'ad no——"

"Silence, you dog." The officer cried out something in German, and again the rifle-butt jolted into his ribs with such force that he groaned. "What division do you belong to?"

"'Undred and fortieth." Our friend's tone was surly.

"Say 'sir,' when you speak to me. How long have you been in this part of the line?"

"I've been 'ere a month, guv'nor—I mean, sir."

"Not you, dolt." The officer stormed at him. "Your division, I mean."

"Strike me pink, guv'nor, I dunno—I dunno, reely."

The wretched John's small amount of brain was rapidly going. Again the officer said something in German, and again an agonizing jab took him in the ribs. It was a mistake, that last jab, if only the officer had known it. Given food and comparative kindness, out of pure ignorance of the harm he would be doing, John might have racked his brains and said a lot. But that last unnecessary blow made him sullen—and when a man of that type gets sullen the Sphinx is talkative in comparison. For half an hour the cross-examination continued; were the men's spirits good, did they think they were winning, what was the food like? And, ultimately, the officer told him in a furious voice that even for an Englishman he'd never met such a mutton-headed fool. With a last parting kick he was hurled into a corner and told to lie there.

Bruised in every limb, he crouched dazedly where he fell; with the whole of the slow, fierce anger of the countryman raging in his heart against the officer who still sat at the table. Occasionally men came in and saluted, but no word was spoken; and after a while John noticed that he seemed to be writing occasional sentences on pieces of paper. Sometimes an orderly came in and took one away; more often he crumpled them up and threw them on the floor. And then he suddenly noticed that the officer had a peculiar thing fitted round his head, with two discs that came over his ears.

"Come here." The terse command roused John from his semi-dazed stupor; he realized the officer was speaking to him. "Put these over your ears, and tell me if you recognize who is speaking."

He handed a similar pair of discs over the table, which the Englishman clumsily put on his head. At first he could hear nothing distinctly but only a confused medley of chirrups and squeaks. Then suddenly quite distinctly there came a clear, metallic voice: "Halloa! is that the Exchange? Give me Don Beer."

"Gawd!" said John, in amazement. "'Oo the 'ell is it?"

"That's what I want to find out," snapped the German. "Do you know the voice?"

"But it's in English." Our friend still gaped foolishly at this strange phenomenon.

"Do you know who it is, you dunder-headed idiot?" howled the officer, in a fury.

"Lumme; I dunno who it is. 'Ow should I?" John was aggrieved—righteously aggrieved. "Look out; the perisher's talking again."

"Is that you, Don Beer?" The thin voice came once again clearly to John. "Oh! is that you, Sally? Heard anything more about that man of yours they got this morning?" John noticed the officer was writing.

"Not a word, old dear. He was the world's most monumental idiot, so I wish 'em joy of him." Then once again the squeak chorus drowned everything else.

But John had heard enough. Regardless of the somewhat unflattering description of himself, unmindful of the officer's short laugh, he stared with amazement at the wall of the dug-out. For he had recognized that last voice.

"Who was that? D'you know?" The officer looked at John sharply.

"Well, I'm danged!" he muttered. "That last were old Sally—the old man."

"What old man, you fool?"

"Why, our colonel, guv'nor. There ain't more'n one old man."

"Oh!" The officer made a note. "So that was the colonel of your battalion, was it?"

"It wor, guv'nor—sir. An' if I might make so bold, sir, seeing as 'ow I 'aven't 'ad any food like since last night——"

"Silence, you worm." The officer got up, and struck him in the mouth. "We don't give food to Englishmen. Go back to your kennel. I may want you again."

He pointed to the corner, and resumed his seat, with the receivers of the listening apparatus over his ears once more. But John Walters was not interested—the entire performance left him cold. He wanted food, he wanted drink, and the few German prisoners he'd seen had not wanted in vain. With a fierce smouldering rage in his heart, he lay hunched up, and his eyes never left the man at the table.

A far quicker-witted specimen than our friend might well have been excused for feeling a little dazed by the position he found himself in. To be suddenly torn from the peaceful monotony of ordinary trench life; to be removed forcibly from his friends, deprived of his breakfast and of his pipe; to be stunned by a blow on the head and on recovering consciousness to have the pleasure of hearing his colonel describe him as a most monumental idiot does not happen to everyone.

To the unfortunate John, still partially dazed and therefore slower on the uptake than ever, the situation was beyond solution. The only dominant thoughts which filled his mind were that he was hungry, and that he hated the man at the table. Every now and then he fell into a kind of stupor; only to come to again with a start, and see the same officer, with the same arrangement over his head, writing—writing. He was always writing, it seemed to John, and the constant stream of orderlies annoyed him.

God! how he hated that man. Lying in the corner, he watched him vindictively with his fists clenched and the veins standing out on his neck; then everything would go blurred again—his head would fall forward, and he would lie inert, like a log, practically unconscious. Men were moving; the officer was writing; he could still realize his surroundings dimly, but only with the realization of light-headedness. At one time the dug-out seemed to be the taproom of the One Ton—a hostelry largely patronized by our friend in the days of peace; while the officer who wrote took unto himself the guise of the proud owner. At another he thought he was in the battalion orderly-room and that the man behind the table was his C.O. He tried to remember what his offence was, and why he was lying down, and why the escort was moving about instead of standing beside him. Then his brain cleared again and he remembered.

The exact act which cleared his senses on that occasion was yet a further application of the boot by one of the dimly-moving figures. With a grunt John sat up and found beside him a hunk of unappetizing-looking brown bread and a mug of water.

"Eat that up." The officer was speaking. "Then I shall want you again—so be quick."

John needed no second order. The fact that the bread was mouldy troubled him not at all; a hungry man looks not a gift loaf in the interstices. With a rapidity which would hardly be commended in a brochure on etiquette, he fell upon that hunk of bread, and having demolished it he felt better. It was just as he was washing down the last crumb with the last drop of water that he saw the officer at the table spring to his feet, while the two orderlies beside him also straightened up and stood to attention. He looked round to find the reason of the commotion, and found another officer standing near him regarding him malevolently. Somewhat refreshed by his meal, the worthy John came to the conclusion that he disliked the new arrival's face almost

as much as his original enemy's, and returned the look with all the interest he was capable of displaying. It was not a judicious thing to do, but our friend was not a past-master in the higher forms of tact. Once again the dug-out became animated. Hitherto untouched areas of his anatomy received attention from two scandalized orderlies, and the ruffled dignity of the new-comer—a bull-necked man of unprepossessing aspect—was soothed. It was only John Walters's fury that increased until it almost choked him; but then to the other occupants of the dug-out John Walters's fury was a thing of no account. And but for the next little turn in the wheel of fate, their indifference was quite justifiable. No man, even though he possess the strength of ten, is much use when an ounce of lead goes in at his chest and out at his back.

Completely disregarding the sullen prisoner, who stood breathing a little heavily just in front of an armed orderly, the two officers started an animated conversation. John, it is perhaps unnecessary to state, understood not one word; his school curriculum had not included German. Even had they spoken in English it is doubtful if their remarks would have conveyed much to him; though they furnished the reason of his temporary retention in his present abode.

"Any success?" The new-comer pointed to the receiver-discs lying on the table.

"Yes." The other officer held out one of the sets. "Try them on, and see what you think."

"Have you identified any of the speakers?"

The bull-necked man was adjusting his instrument.

"Only the colonel of the North Sussex for certain. That unmitigated fool"—he glared at John, who scowled sullenly back—"is too much of a fool to tell one anything. He is the thing we got this morning asleep in a sap."

The other nodded, listening intently, and for a while silence reigned in the dug-out.

To John the whole affair was inexplicable; but then a new and complicated listening apparatus might have been expected to be a bit above his form. He heard a salvo of shells come screeching past the entrance shaft, and realized with a momentary interest that they sounded much the same when they were English shells as they did when they were German. Then something hit the ground just outside with a thud, a something which he diagnosed correctly as a trench mortar bomb, and a second afterwards exploded with a roar which deafened him, while a mass of dirt and lumps of chalk rained down the shaft.

The occupants of the dug-out betrayed no excitement; only John longed, with an incoherent longing, that another sixty-pounder would roll down the shaft next time before it exploded. He felt he would cheerfully die, if only those two accursed officers died at the same time.

Then came another salvo of shells and yet another; while in rapid succession the Stokes and Medium trench mortars came crumping down.

"A bit hactive to-night," thought John, listening with undisguised interest to the bursts outside. After all they were *his* bursts; he had every right to feel a fatherly pleasure in this strafing of the accursed Hun, even though his present position as one of them left much to be desired. A gentle smile of toleration spread over his face, the smile of the proud proprietor exhibiting his wares to an unworthy audience—and he glanced at the two officers. He noticed they were looking inquiringly at one another, as if debating in their minds whether it was an ordinary strafe or whether——

Suddenly the firing stopped, only to break out again as if by clockwork, a little farther away; and with that sudden change of target any doubts they had entertained as to the nature of the entertainment disappeared. They were being raided and they knew it; and any further doubts they may have still had on the matter were dispelled by a sudden shouting in the trench above them, coupled with the sharp cracks of bursting bombs.

To John the situation was still a little obscure. His brain creaked round sufficiently to enable him to realize that something had occurred to break up the happy meeting and cause feverish activity on the part of his captors. Various strange instruments were being hurriedly stowed away in a corner of the dug-out to the accompaniment of much guttural language; but his brain was still trying to grasp what had happened when he saw a thing which quickened his movements. Completely forgotten in the general rush he stood by the table, while the others darted backwards and forwards past him, carrying the instruments; and then suddenly the quickener arrived. Rolling down the steps there came a little black egg-shaped ball, which John recognized quicker than he had ever recognized anything before. It was a Mills bomb, and the pin was out. He was no

bombing expert, but the habits of a Mills are known to most people who live with the breed. Four seconds—and then a most unpleasing explosion, especially when in a confined space like a dug-out.

So John acted. With a dispassionate grunt, he seized one of the orderlies who was brushing past him at the moment, all unmindful of the danger; and having picked him off the ground as if he were a baby he deposited him on the bomb, just in time. Barely had the dazed Hun alighted gently on the bomb when the bomb went off. So did the Hun, and the fun began. John's playful action had—amongst other good effects—prevented the lights from being blown out; and so at the trifling cost of one orderly he was in what is known as a strategically sound position. Moreover, he was in the most dreadful rage which had ever shaken his torpid character. Stunned by the sudden shock of the unexpected bomb and paralyzed for the moment by the sight of the shattered man, the three Germans gazed foolishly at John Walters. And in that moment he went in at them, roaring like a bull. The second orderly fell like a stone with a blow on the point of the jaw which would have felled an ox; and only the two officers were left.

With a howl of rage the bull-necked officer rushed at him, and John grinned gently. He had no particular animosity against him: it was the other one he was after. So he hit him—once—and the bull-necked one slept, even like a little child.

Then for a moment or two John Walters stood still and contemplated the last occupant. Up above were his own pals, while down below his tormentor faced him alone. And they were on equal terms: they were both unarmed.

With a grunt of rage he caught that officer by the throat and shook him like a rat. All the fury pent up for so many hours came out as he bashed at his face with his fist. "No food, you dirty swine!" he muttered—bash, bash. "Kicked in me stummick, 'it in me mouth. I'll show yer—you perishin' 'Un! Come on upstairs and see the fun—come on, yer sausage-eating 'og!"

Bumping, heaving, pulling, he dragged the semi-unconscious German up the shaft and with a mighty effort heaved him into the trench. There was no one in sight, though all around him bombs were going off—while away on each flank and behind the trench a ceaseless series of explosions merged into one continuous blast. John grunted again, and heaved the officer on to the parapet.

"Back 'ome with me this time, me beauty! Kicked in the stummick, no food since last night, and then a perisher trod on it. Gaw lumme, wot a life! Come on, yer swine!" and John got in the first real kick in the ribs with his boot. "Hup and hover. Gawd!—wot's that?"

Clear above the din there came from the British lines a discordant braying, which rose and fell like the wailing of a giant animal. It was the recall signal to the raiders.

"'Op it, yer bla'guard, 'op it 'ard!" The bombing had died away, though the guns and mortars still roared. "In front of me, Mr. 'Un—in front of me. Some of our boys be light on the trigger."

With the German firmly clasped to his chest the worthy John rushed him across No Man's Land. "It's Walters—John Walters," he bawled at the top of his voice—"wiv a 'Un." With a last final kick he sent him flying over the top of the parapet and fell in after him, breathing hard.

"What the devil?" An officer in the trench got up and gazed at the pair in amazement. "Who the hell are you?"

"John Walters, sir—wiv a 'Un." He scratched his head and mechanically kicked the recumbent German. "Get up, yer swine, and speak to the orficer!"

"Are you the fellow who was taken prisoner this morning?"

"Yes, sir, that's me." He gazed vindictively at his enemy. "An' not a bit of food since last night, and then some perisher trod on it. Gaw lumme, wot a life! Lucky as 'ow the boys come over, sir, or I wouldn't 'ave 'ad none at all—wiv that there swine."

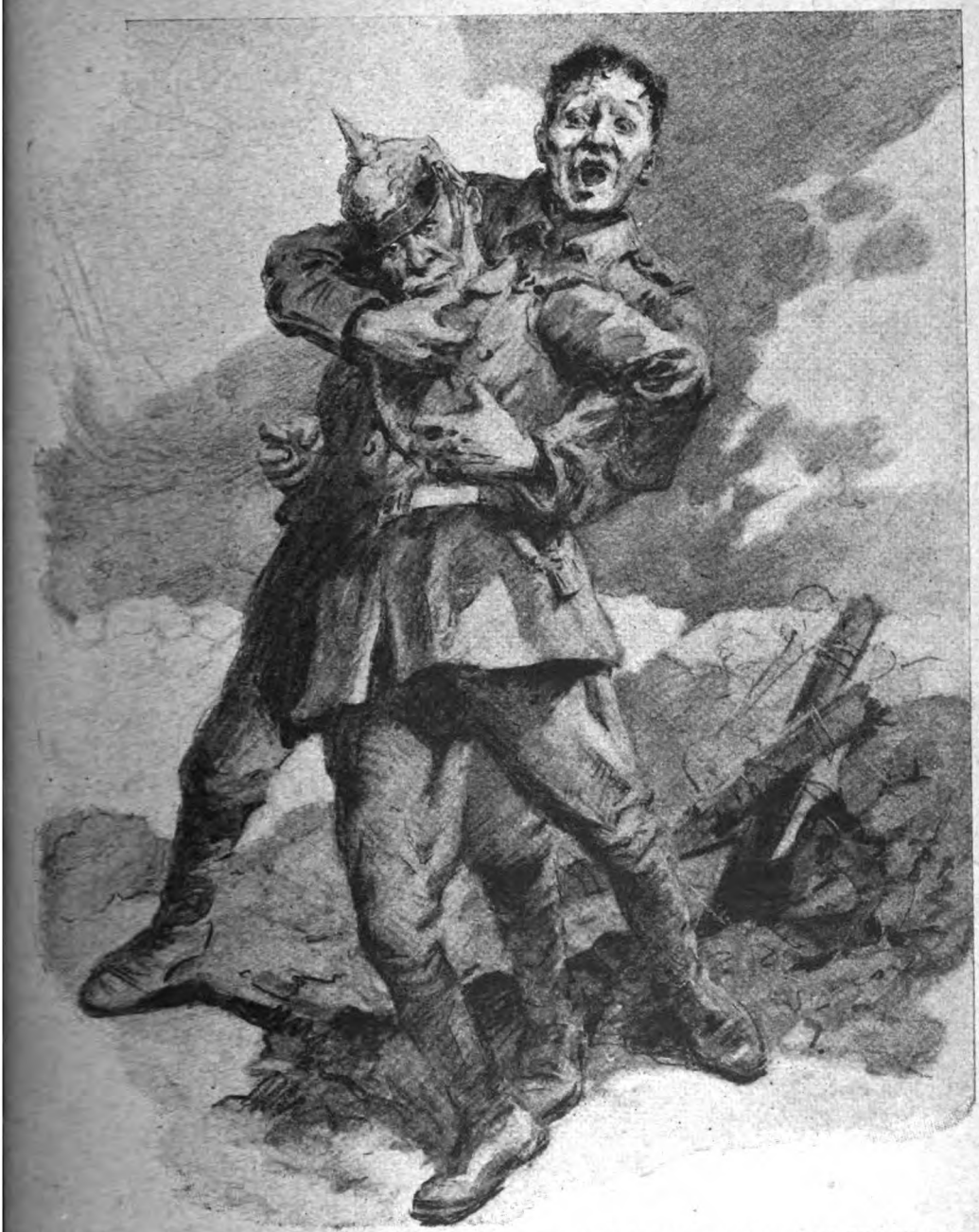
"Great Scot!" murmured the officer. This sudden appearance of the lost sheep temporarily unnerved him.

Not so John Walters. Having administered a final kick to the groaning Hun, he slouched moodily off into the night. His rage had abated—there only remained one thing to do before food. Absolutely unperturbed by various red and green lights which were now going up continuously from the German trenches as a signal for help, quite unmindful of the heavy shelling which had now started on our own trenches, the worthy John strode on to his appointed goal.

"'Ave yer seen it lying about, mate?"

An astonished sentry peering into the darkness swung round sharply at the sudden voice behind him.

"Seen wot?" he demanded, crustily. "Wot are yer nosing abaht there for, and 'oo are yer, anyway?"



"BUMPING, HEAVING, PULLING, HE DRAGGED THE SEMI-UNCONSCIOUS GERMAN UP THE SHAFT AND WITH A MIGHTY EFFORT HEAVED HIM INTO THE TRENCH."

"John Walters, mate—John Walters, C Company."

"Lumme, but you was took prisoner this morning by the 'Uns!"

"I knows it—I knows all abaht that. What I wants to know is—where's my ruddy pipe wot I dropped? Not a bit o' food since last night, and then some perisher trod on it. And now"—he was delving in the mud at the bottom of the sap—"danged if some other plurry perisher ain't been and gone and trod on this too!" By the light of a flare he ruefully examined two bits of a broken clay pipe. "Gaw lumme, wot a life!"

CLERICAL ERRORS.

By F. BAYFORD HARRISON.

Illustrated by H. K. Elcock.

THE distinction between wit and humour is not quite easy to define. Briefly, we may say that wit has a sharp edge and humour a blunt one. Wit gives the gash of a knife, humour the blow of a bludgeon. For one person who starts at the gash of the knife a dozen are knocked prone by the bludgeon. In wit the Irish and the French are supreme; humour is an asset of the Scot and the American. A really humorous Englishman is a rarity. It is still, in a way, the fashion to compare the qualities of Thackeray and Dickens, those giants of wit and humour in the mid-Victorian era. Both were great humorists, but of actual wit there is not a glimmer in Dickens. Thackeray's wit had a keen edge; it cut like a razor, but it did not make us laugh; Dickens's humour had a broad and flat blade, and provoked hearty laughter. It needs a somewhat keen wit on the part of the reader to feel all the keenness of Becky Sharp, Lady Kew, Major Pendennis, and others; but no one can fail to see the drollery of a Sam Weller, a Mr. Dick, a Quilp.

We seldom do more than smile at a witty remark; but we laugh aloud at a humorous speech. Wit may make many enemies; humour makes many friends. And for happiness in life wit is a dangerous possession, but humour a most valuable one.

Incongruity is perhaps the chief reason why humorous stories concerning the learned professions are so plentiful and pleasant. Especially delightful are anecdotes of reverend divines turned into ridicule; next come tales in which physicians are worsted by their patients; and lastly those of the discomfiture of lawyers. There is to be found the sharpest wit in the tales of the Bar; but the broadest humour in those which deal with the Pulpit. Therefore it is that these latter are the most pungent and the most popular.

It sometimes happens that the divine is himself the humorist. A clergyman speaking from the pulpit about the sorrows of humanity remarked that all of us have our troubles: husbands lose wives, parents lose children; "some are crossed in love, and some wish they had been." Certainly this was intentional humour, and worthy of the name of wit. From the same pulpit, though not from the same lips, came the quaint remark which is quoted in the late Mr. Preston Thomas's book, "Work and Play." The preacher enforced his argument by saying: "We all of us wash every day—or at least once a week." His eye had fallen on the side aisle filled by his worthy friends of a class which seldom has a bathroom in the cottage. He was too conscientious to assume that they could do as much in the way of ablutions as himself. He was entirely unconscious of his own humour. As was the nervous Welsh curate who exclaimed in delight at the thought of a spring day in the woods round Bettws-y-Coed: "When you see the birds bursting on every spray." Again, quite unaware of his humour was the child who was taken to the festival of an orphanage. There was present an estimable peer who made a long and dull speech. The first time he paused for breath our little friend broke in with a loud chanted "Amen!" This was so quaintly funny that the tiny heckler had to be carried out by his nurse.

A country parish was holding high holiday, and the Bishop was present. An addition to the churchyard was to be consecrated. The weather was damp. It was noticed by the congregation that his lordship wore a pair of clumsy goloshes. When the anthem was announced, it proved to be, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."

The above incidents can all be vouched for by the present writer. They come under the category of unconscious humour, except perhaps the first.

Amongst the thousands of anecdotes connected with what we may call Clerical Errors made either by the clergy or at their expense, there are to be found but few which can be fresh to any, but here and there are some so

"WHEN YOU SEE THE BIRDS BURSTING ON EVERY SPRAY."

ancient as to have become legendary. These are mostly tales of certain reverend gentlemen who achieved fame by their wit or humour. Who would remember Sydney Smith but for his clever sayings? Certainly his grateful parishioners would do so, if any now survive; but for the world in general he only lives in history as the Witty Canon, though in truth he was much more than merely witty. Swift was the Witty Dean. Whately was the Witty Archbishop. Magee was, *par excellence*, the Witty Bishop.

The Archbishop of Dublin was sometimes hit by a chance witticism as sharp as one of his own. For example, he tells a story of a boy's essay in which he wrote: "There are no wild beasts in Ireland now, except in theological gardens." Of another super-Prelate this excellent retort on his part is related: Archbishop Temple wished to get rid of Addington Palace, near Croydon, and to take a house near his cathedral. When he asked the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to sanction this arrangement they demurred. "Do you think," they asked, "that your successors will wish to live at Canterbury?" "No, I don't," replied the Archbishop, with emphasis; "and so I'm determined that they shall." The same celebrated cleric bought an Exeter paper at the time when he was bishop of that city, for the express purpose of reading in it the paragraph: "In addressing the working men of Bristol last night the Bishop made the incredible statement, 'I never was drunk in my life.'"

It was at Addington that Dr. Benson was sorry to find that his stablemen, like the bell-ringers in some parishes, rarely appeared at divine service. "They ought to go," said his Grace's coachman. "I says to them, 'Look at me; I goes; and what 'arm does it do me?'" This must have been rather disconcerting. And rather disconcerted Bishop Wilberforce must have felt once on a time. He was riding along a country lane, when a naughty boy threw a stone at him. The Bishop reprimanded the lad, and reminded him that God could see all his actions. The urchin asked whether God could see him in his grandmother's back kitchen. "Certainly," replied the Bishop. On which the urchin triumphantly answered, with a provoking grin, "She ain't got one."

If Archbishop Temple considered his position as one of too much wealth and too many possessions, there have been others of the episcopal rank who felt themselves too poor. Gervase Babington, appointed Bishop of Llandaff by Queen Elizabeth, was so vexed

"HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THEM THAT PREACH THE GOSPEL OF PEACE."

at the poverty of the see (its income was but one hundred and fifty-four pounds) that he used to say that he ought to be called the Bishop of Aff, because the *land* was gone. Of his later sees, Exeter and Worcester, he did not complain.

Many a bishop, if not with a full pocket of his own, contrives to draw coin from the pockets of his hearers. Bishop Anon preached what was then called a "charity sermon" in a country church; it was a very windy and unpleasant day for his visit. "That is no matter," said his lordship; "what did I come for but to raise the wind?" He had condescended to make a pun, and was of the same opinion as another unnamed prelate, who declared that the only pardonable schism was a witticism.

Not witty, but with an edge sharper than that of any clever speech, was the opening sentence of the Funeral Oration of Louis XIV., spoken by Massillon, the celebrated Bishop of Clermont. He looked upon the splendid catafalque, on the impressive and solemn pomp, on the church crowded with mourners of rank and fashion, and he said, simply: "My brothers, God alone is great." The words brought the congregation to their feet, and turning from the bier of the "grand monarque," they bowed to the altar of the living God, the King of kings.

A bitter retort is recorded in an old book consisting chiefly of Scottish anecdotes. "An

"THE URCHIN TRIUMPHANTLY ANSWERED, WITH A PROVOKING GRIN, 'SHE AIN'T GOT ONE.'"

"IN MY OPINION THE BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST LIARS IN CREATION; BUT, THANK GOD! WE HAVE A MATCH FOR HIM TO-NIGHT."

honest man of Perth, being met on Sunday morning going from the church, was exhorted by 'Oh, John, do not miss the kirk; there will be no preaching in Hell!' 'Indeed?' says John. 'It will nae be for lack o' ministers there.'"

A Welsh deacon with strong convictions but weak sense of humour introduced Mr. Lloyd George to a public meeting with these words: "Gentlemen, I have to introduce to you to-night the member for the Carnarvon Boroughs. He has come here to reply to the Bishop of St. Asaph. In my opinion the Bishop of St. Asaph is one of the biggest liars in creation; but, thank God! we have a match for him to-night."

To Bishop Walsham How are attributed innumerable good stories. He used to tell how a curate of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington, once asked the prayers of the congregation for "a family crossing the Atlantic, and other sick persons." Another of his anecdotes was of an old woman whose husband was very ill. She said, "I do my best for him: I read the Burial Service to him every day, to get him used to it."

The following episcopal error was made at the time of the Zulu War. The Bishop in his address to the candidates for confirmation had made some allusions to the war then being waged, and began his peroration with the words, "And now, my dear young Zulus."

One cannot but think that many witticisms have been made beforehand and "tinned," ready for consumption when required, such

"YES, YOUR RIVERINCE, IT DO MAKE THE SKIN TENDER, DON'T IT?"

as Sydney Smith's well-known rejoinder when asked if he objected to burying dissenters: "On the contrary; I should be delighted to bury them all."

Amongst clerics the Irish priest is generally credited with the readiest wit. He has to deal with a ready-witted people and must needs equal them in conversational weapons. To Father James Healy, of Bray, are attributed a host of good stories. Sometimes he met with a diamond which cut into his own diamond. A barber was shaving him. "There now, you have cut me! Ah, whisky, whisky!" said the priest. "Yes, your riverince," replied the acute delinquent, "it do make the skin tender, don't it?" In Ireland, as in Scotland, a great deal of native humour is concerned with whisky. Here is an extract from a sermon preached in the Emerald Isle: "What is it that makes ye bate your wives? Whisky. And what is it makes ye neglect and ill-treat your poor children? Whisky. And what is it makes ye shoot your landlords? Whisky. And what is it makes ye miss them? Whisky." In the days of Curran there was a Father O'Leary who was said to be the wittiest priest in Ireland at that time. Said the famous and eloquent barrister to the famous and sharp-tongued cleric, "I wish you were St. Peter, for then you would have the keys of Heaven and could let me in." The father replied: "It were better for you if I had the keys of the other place, for then I could let you out."

So simple a matter as reading the lessons in church would not seem to afford much scope for errors; but it must have been startling to hear a cricketing curate finish his task with the words: "Here endeth the first innings." The late Lord Coleridge was a Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and sometimes it was his duty to read the lessons in chapel. One day he read by mistake the second lesson when he should have read the first. To conclude it in the orthodox way was hardly correct, as it was not the second lesson but the first; nor could it well be described as the first lesson, as properly it was the second. A moment's hesitation supplied him with the appropriate word: "Here endeth the wrong lesson."

Of the making of jests at the expense of the clergy there is no end. "A joke in crape is twice a joke in lawn." And many of the amusing stories attributed to dignitaries have probably occurred in the careers of lesser lights. A gentleman being shown over an old church by the verger, and seeing that it was somewhat out of repair, asked if they had any dry rot in it. "Only in the pulpit, sir," was the verger's reply.

It is told that when "General" Booth died General Botha sent a telegram to Bramwell Booth: "Accept warmest sympathy. A great good man is gone. May you follow in his footsteps." Unintentional humour. But a Scottish lady knew well what she was about in her rejoinder to a canting friend who said that he would come to dinner if he was spared. She rejoined: "Weel, weel, if ye're dead I'll no expect ye."

"WEEL, WEEL, IF YE'RE DEAD I'LL NO EXPECT YE."

The Man Who Never Did Right.

By HYLTON CLEAVER.

Illustrated by John E. Sutcliffe.

I.

HE was a most unhappy little man, considerably perplexed with life and prematurely grey. Adam, they called him, though he was wont to introduce himself as Mr. Bale. He could not have been far past middle age. Yet there had been so many failures in his life that he had come at last to that dejected shabbiness which years of disappointment do invariably bring.

An undistinguished little figure, therefore, with a stubby tuft of beard hiding the weakness of his chin, and a little sorrowful moustache that he had never trimmed, was Adam. Moreover, he wore glasses, a large-rimmed pair, which he took off habitually in the midst of conversation to finger, and eventually replace a little low upon the nose as he looked up inquiringly for confirmation of some odd remark. He wore an ill-cut suit of russet brown and a faded Trilby hat, and looked for all the world just like some struggling little tailorman whom nobody will pay. But in reality he was a journalist, unknown, untalented, and very unsuccessful. As if to point to the fact he stood now with a lost and hesitant expression at a corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields, blinking at those who passed him, with the slight self-consciousness of one who all his life has been adjudged a fool. For this was true of Adam. His history was one long trail of blunders and short-sightedness. With paper after paper he had lost all prestige; for many years his life had been a struggle. And so to-day he was low upon the ladder of journalistic eminence, a man who had never been known to do the right thing, a penny-a-liner on the staff of the *Evening World*.

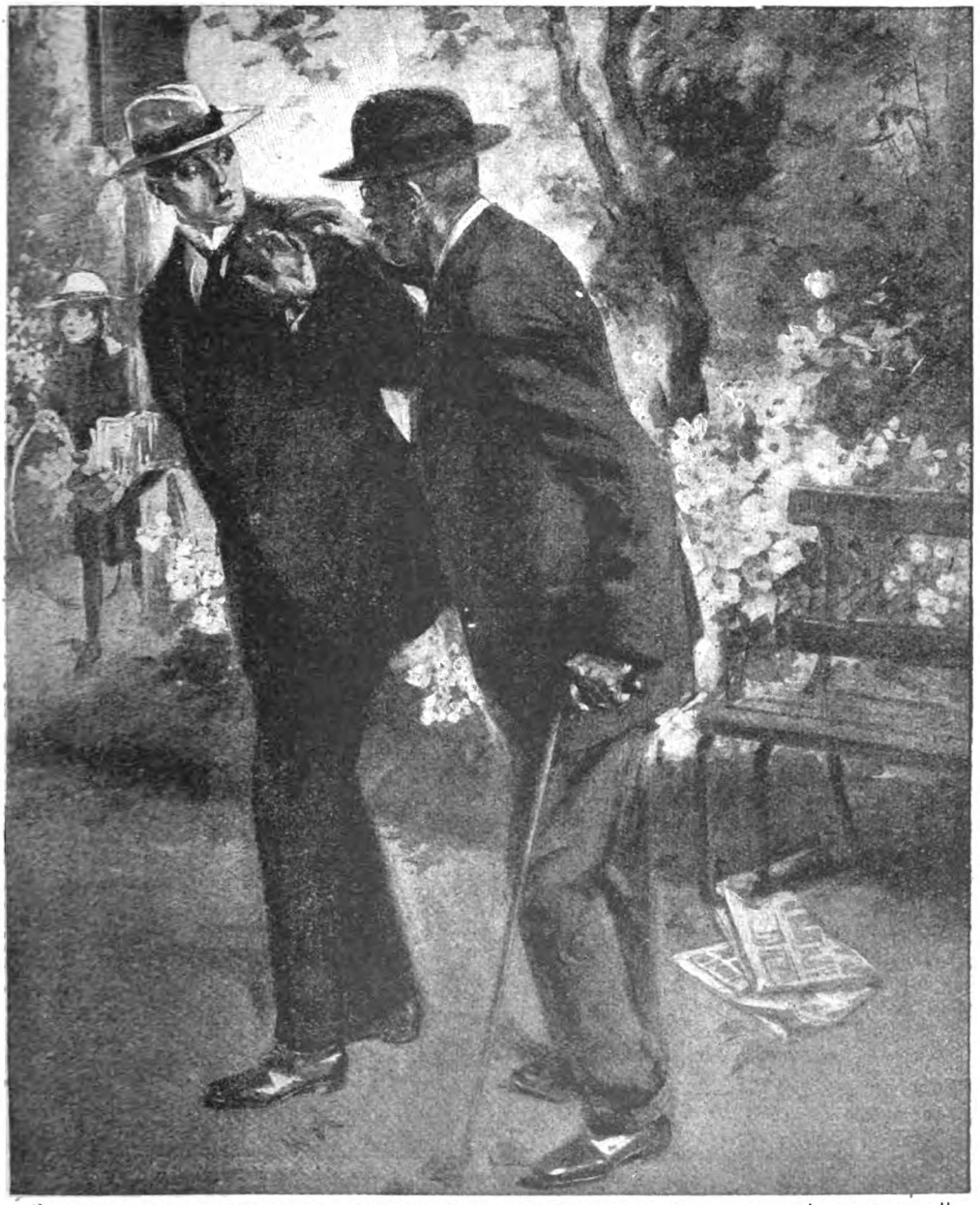
He blinked up thoughtfully at the sunlit windows of the Inns of Court Hotel, wondering if he dared——

Last night a rare opportunity had come to him. No less a personage than Callem Mott, one of the cleverest and best-liked journalists of the day, had sent him to review a play on his behalf. It was a chance. If he could turn out an entertaining little article he might get other work, for Callem Mott was very busy nowadays, and had need of satellites. He had to take his article to the Press Club this morning for Mott to glance through and sign and send to the Editor. There was not much time. Yet he still stood, wondering.

Undoubtedly Max Weldon had been wrong. Adam felt sure of that. He had waved his arms about and shouted. Adam did not believe that any man unjustly and quite unexpectedly accused of murder would have waved his arms or shouted. To his mind Weldon's violence had been overdone. It had spoilt the scene. Dare he say so in print above the name of Callem Mott? Dare he so criticize a limelight favourite like Weldon?

He moved from the corner and began to walk fretfully along the bordered path, furrowing his brow, plucking abstractedly at his little beard. And suddenly he noticed that a man who was walking just in front had dropped a letter from within a folded newspaper under his arm. He went on a little faster and picked it up. At that moment the idea came to him. Never in all his after life could Adam tell you why, but whilst he glanced at the name on the envelope an odd thought took shape in his mind. He would test his case. The name of the man ahead was on this envelope. He would go up behind him and accuse that man of murder. Of what murder? He hesitated just a moment. There was only one. The murder of Joseph Bentley—the one case wherein nobody could find the guilty man, or a clue, or make any arrest at all. Good. He would tap this man suddenly upon the shoulder and accuse him. Afterwards, explanations would be simple. He would give back the letter. "I wanted to find out if Max Weldon's right," he would say, "in 'The Grip.' I wanted to see what a man really would do in a case like that." And then, a little proudly, he would add, "I'm a dramatic critic." Then they would laugh together, and walk across the road, chatting as they went, and part with a few words over a glass of ale.

He closed up and his hand came down



"HE CLOSED UP AND HIS HAND CAME DOWN DRAMATICALLY UPON THE OTHER'S SHOULDER."

dramatically upon the other's shoulder. The man turned. Adam was looking at him eagerly.

"John Mills," said he, "I am here to arrest you for the murder of Joseph Bentley."

There came a tense, remarkable silence. He was a young man, lined a little about the eyes. He looked at Adam steadily. There was a touch of sorrow in his expression.

"Very well," he said, wearily. "Am I to come with you at once?"

Never before had Adam felt so unutterably foolish. His first sensation was that of a man ducked suddenly in deep water. As understanding came to him, however, he realized that he was gaping, and that he must look very silly. So he slowly glanced up at the tall young man—he seemed a long way up. Adam was very small. If—if—— But why on earth hadn't the fellow just smashed his hat over his head with his stick and run? Anyway, he hadn't. No, there he stood self-confessedly. A dry little click came from Adam's throat. He took off his glasses confusedly and began to finger them

"Have you a warrant?" asked the other.

The situation was so utterly preposterous that Adam had not thought of this; yet as seconds passed his wild confusion gradually vanished and he found his brain leaping to the enormity of the moment, working with an altogether new rapidity. He accepted this miracle now, much as a tramp accepts a ten-pound note.

"No," he said, jerkily. "It's—it's a question, you see, of whether you want me to call a uniformed policeman—or whether you prefer to come quietly with me now."

He replaced his glasses, blinking up hopefully at the young man. The latter slowly nodded his head.

"I see. I—yes—it would be less unpleasant."

He made a despairing gesture. Adam looked up at him and saw there was a set look on his face, a cold, unseeing stare. Adam dropped into step beside him.

"Gray's Inn Road," he said, excited beyond all precedent. And now his brain was working like a dynamo.

II.

THE Editor sat in his chair behind a littered table. Before him, with the humble air of a boy who has been detected in some naughtiness, stood Adam, twisting his faded Trilby hat abstractedly in his hands. A half-drawn blind kept the sun from his troubled face, throwing it slantwise across innumerable papers on the table. On this oasis Adam fixed his eyes. There was a quiver in his voice, although he tried to keep it still. Once he looked down and saw with sudden horror that one of his trouser-legs was turned up, the other down. He made an impetuous movement with his hand as if to reach his boots, and suddenly straightened himself again and went on with his story.

"But I don't understand," said the Editor, gravely. "Did he come with you quietly—without a warrant, or the shadow of a policeman, or anything at all?"

Adam nodded. "I think," he suggested, "he knew that the game was up."

"On the contrary," retorted the potentate in the revolving chair, "had he been guilty I should say he would have hit you on the head and made off. You are not, if I may say so, a very formidable obstruction, Bale."

"Well, he didn't," said Adam.

"So it seems. And, you know, that makes me think. It makes me go cold all over, Bale. I remember other little stunts of yours that—went wrong. I hope this isn't another idiotic mistake." He spoke severely, almost threateningly.

Adam twisted a little on one foot, a sorrowful figure. The most wonderful coincidence had given into his hands the key to the mystery of the day. He—stupid Adam Bale—had brought to book the most-wanted criminal in London, had actually put him under lock and key. And nobody would believe him. He had not a strand of evidence at all; nothing on which he could possibly convict the man but his own willingness to be arrested. Now the Editor said even that could only point to confidence in his innocence. In his own heart Adam felt certain that he had really found Bentley's murderer. One had only to look into the fellow's face to see it. But who else would believe? And, above all, how without evidence could he win the great praise, the rise in life, the everlasting fame of having tricked him?

Well, the man was safely in cells for twenty-four hours. Adam had just that time to find his proofs, just that time in which to make his name.

Suddenly the door behind him opened and another man came in. The Editor nodded cheerfully.

"Ah, Bagshaw! I sent for you to come in and hear this man's story. One of our—er—reporters. He—well, the fellow's made an arrest in—er—your case."

He raised his eyebrows slightly. The Special Correspondent came forward and peered at him distastefully. Then he glanced at the Editor and said, "Oh, really? Who's he arrested?"

Adam looked up quickly, as a beaten dog will, and down again.

"A man called Mills," said the Editor.

The other inclined his head with an air of polite interest, paused——

"I thought," he said, softly, "that you put *me* on to the Bentley case?"

The Editor nodded thoughtfully. There was an awkward silence. At last Adam spoke—quickly, crossly; he was acutely nervous.

"I'd taken a little personal interest in the case," he said, "in my spare time. I'd followed a clue or two. At last I got on to this trail. I came up with Mills this morning. He—made no resistance."

Surely that sounded plausible enough? But the two men seemed not to hear. The Editor tapped casually on the table with his pen. The Special Correspondent smiled cynically.

"It would make it easier, sir," he said, "for me to work on this case if I were left alone. It's trying to have this little fellow always dodging about behind me, like the clown in a circus. I mean, it only gives away situations."

"I *never* dodged about behind you," said Adam, bitterly.

The other spread his hands.

"How else did you obtain your clues?"

So at last the question had come. How he had dreaded it! He plucked off his glasses, stood for a moment fingering them. He knew all the torment of a prisoner who has been cross-examined for a day and a half by counsel for the Crown. Yet he had only been in the room ten minutes.

"That," he answered, presently, "I will not tell—just now. I still have some investigations to complete, some evidence to formulate. Meanwhile my man is under lock and key. That is more," he added, turning passionately to the Special Correspondent, "than you have done, anyway."

The other grinned at him.

"But, my good man," said the Editor, "you

must tell us something—some line on which you have gone."

"Not yet," said Adam, and the note in his voice was almost pleading. They were bullying him. He would not be bullied. It wasn't fair. They must give him time. Why should they rob him of his moment?

Again there came that terrible, heavy silence. The Special Correspondent chuckled once, as if to himself. At last the Editor slowly turned his chair away from the table and stretched his arms.

"Very well, Bale," he said, "you may go. Let me hear what transpires."

The Special Correspondent stood aside. Adam clutched his hat tightly in his fist and slipped out. There was a dryness in his throat. He had still one day in which to turn the laugh, for once in his life, against his enemies. Where should he start? What in the name of God should he do? Totally unlooked-for fame was at last within his reach. But how?—how?

Was ever man faced with such a truly Gilbertian dilemma? Yet he would rise above it. He set his teeth and started down the staircase.

Behind the closed door, the Editor looked up reflectively at his favourite.

"What d'you think?" he said.

"Adam again," said the other, bluntly.

"But is he worth following? Is it good enough to watch? Who is Mills?"

"Never heard of him," said Bagshaw. "He doesn't come into my reckonings at all. Between you and me," he added, "this is some mighty blunder. Some man with the craze for notoriety has led him into a trap. Never mind, let him have plenty of rope. When they find out it's all bosh, let Adam take the blame. Personally," he added, "I've got my own notions about this case, and I'm not going to be side-tracked by Adam. Let him worry along. It amuses him and it doesn't worry me. I sha'n't follow him."

The Editor nodded his head.

"All right, Bagshaw," he said. The Special Correspondent took a cigarette from his case, tapped it thoughtfully, and lit it, stood for a moment in contemplation of the traffic below, turned, and went out casually from the room.

As soon as he had gone the Editor rang a bell. He was a man who knew professional jealousy in all its guises.

"Nevertheless," he murmured, "we will take no chances. The *Evening World* shall have two strings to its bow." There was something in Adam's childish eagerness that had, for once, struck home. He felt there was just a chance that Adam at least knew something.

A youth came into the room, and stood at his side deferentially whilst he wrote for a moment on a slip of paper. And at last he looked up and gave this satellite a quite sensational little note—a little something to appease the appetite of his readers.

"Through the instrumentality of a member of our staff an arrest was made to-day in connection with the Bentley murder."

The youth, glancing at the slip, noted that it was marked with signs that would bring it on to the front page of the *Evening World* that night.

III.

A NEW Adam was born. In the street folk noticed it, and here and there one who knew him turned with a laugh to follow his progress through the crowd. He went like a terrier on the trail, a badly-rolled umbrella prodding folk out of his way; his eyes, looking out from behind his big-rimmed glasses, shone with the fierce light of intense determination. Now and again he moistened his dry lips with the tip of his tongue, and always his fingers worked as he clenched and unclenched his hand, for all the world as if he were itching to clutch at the throat of a man. With some vague idea of wringing evidence out of his wretched capture, he made for the police-station in Gray's Inn Road.

"I want to see Mills," he said; "I want to question him."

They knew Adam and they let him in. Had his prisoner been remonstrative they would as likely as not have let him go ere now. But he had seemed resigned, even disinterested, and so they kept him there, and spoke of him one to the other as if he were on exhibit.

"Old Adam's prisoner," they said, and laughed.

The sergeant on duty glanced up at Adam in veiled amusement, rose, and took a significant key from the wall.

"This is a big thing for you, Mr. Bale," said he.

Adam nodded his head with unexpected vehemence. The light of a fanatic was in his eyes by now. At all costs he must bring this man to book. Fame should be his at last. Rivals had laughed too long. His turn had come.

"A big thing," said Adam, twitching with eagerness. "Yes—a big thing. I must make no mistakes."

So he was closeted at last with his man. Adam stood, hands on his hips, and looked at him keenly—took in his utterly dejected pose, the weary way his hand passed over his head.

Even now he could not think what to say. So frightened was he that he might make a slip, he scarcely dared speak at all. His little mouth worked agitatedly. His eyes never left John Mills's face. At last he decided upon a question. He said:—

"Did you mean to do it?"

The other looked up.

"What does it matter?" he said. "He's dead, isn't he?"

"Manslaughter," said Adam, "would save your life."

"One might call it that," said Mills.

"A blow in self-defence," said Adam, "would be even better."

He did not want this to be proved. He had grown oddly callous this day, and he wanted his capture hanged. He wanted the true fame of one who brings a fiend to the gallows. But he must have evidence somehow, and in this way he might possibly find something out. The other made an impatient gesture.

"What difference can it possibly make?" he

demanded. "Life—penal servitude—five years? Lord, man, don't come here and nag me this way! One year, or six months, might be enough for the crime; but for me—why, I'd just as soon die. Understand? No, of course you don't. You couldn't possibly understand. Well, I've had my revenge; nothing else matters. If you'd have——"

"What?" said Adam, jumping. "If I'd have what?"

"Nothing!" said Mills. "For Heaven's sake go away!"

Adam looked at him spitefully, made a violent gesture, and turned on his heel. This was his case. What right had this fellow to defeat his ends like this?

Out in the street he hesitated once again with the same feverish impatience, started off suddenly towards Holborn, came at last to a chop-house, and went in. He sat down, buried his troubled face in his hands, and thought it all out.

He recalled quite suddenly his article for Callem Mott, wrote a note to him, couched in the language of one busy man to another, and laid it aside for dispatch by hand.

The waitress came up and asked for his order.

"Coffee," he said, and plunged his hand into his pocket for his pipe. And there his fingers touched it, felt it, closed round it, drew it forth. He gazed at it with open mouth and wide, delighted eyes, held it before him, read and re-read it. The envelope! The letter that had started this wonderful episode on its way. Wild thoughts jostled each other in his mind. What would the envelope disclose? His eager fingers went in, and then suddenly his whole expression changed. A look of intense chagrin came over his wrinkled face.

The envelope was absolutely empty! A sudden helpless sob escaped him—something akin to that of a child whose sum *will not* come right. He stared unseeingly before him. Every hour success was slipping from his grasp. What in Heaven's name was he to do? At last he rose, left his coffee untasted, went out distressfully into the street, and there he turned once more and went back slowly, shamefacedly, to his only hope.

"I want to see Mills," he said, brokenly. "I want to put some more questions."

The sergeant looked at him irritably for a moment, then rose once again and gave him the key impatiently.

And again, with a shake of the head, Adam went in.

John Mills was standing by his little barred window lost in thought, and as Adam faced him he slowly turned, and a look of extreme annoyance came into his face.

"What is it now?"

"I am a little puzzled about you," said Adam, cautiously. "You're not quite the type I expected."

"But what is it you want?" insisted Mills. "Why do you keep fluttering round like this? Haven't you got your evidence? Aren't you sure of me? What is it? I mean——" He hesitated. "I've put in a plea of 'Not guilty, but it's purely a matter of form. I'm quite ready to die."

Adam looked at him and slowly nodded his head, as would a doctor over a case he could not altogether diagnose.

"You don't understand what that means," continued Mills. "Do you? You—you shrivelled little swamp-rat! You've never known love—or hope—or jealousy. I doubt if you'd lift a finger against another man, even for blackmail."

Blackmail! Adam pounced on the word, all eagerness to dissect its meaning. It was a clue. Here was the motive. A thrill went through him. He didn't mind being a little swamp-rat at all if he could only get hold of his facts.

Another question sprang to his lips, but he was suddenly shrewd.

"Oh, I know all about that," he said, lightly. "I know it was blackmail. But as a matter of fact there is a little point I'm still interested in. What did you do it *with*?"

"A stick," said Mills, evenly. "A big stick. A stick I brought home with me from Australia. A good heavy stick. My temper got the better of me, and—— Shall I show you how I did it?" He advanced threateningly.

"No," said Adam, drawing back quickly. "No. I—I'm armed, you know."

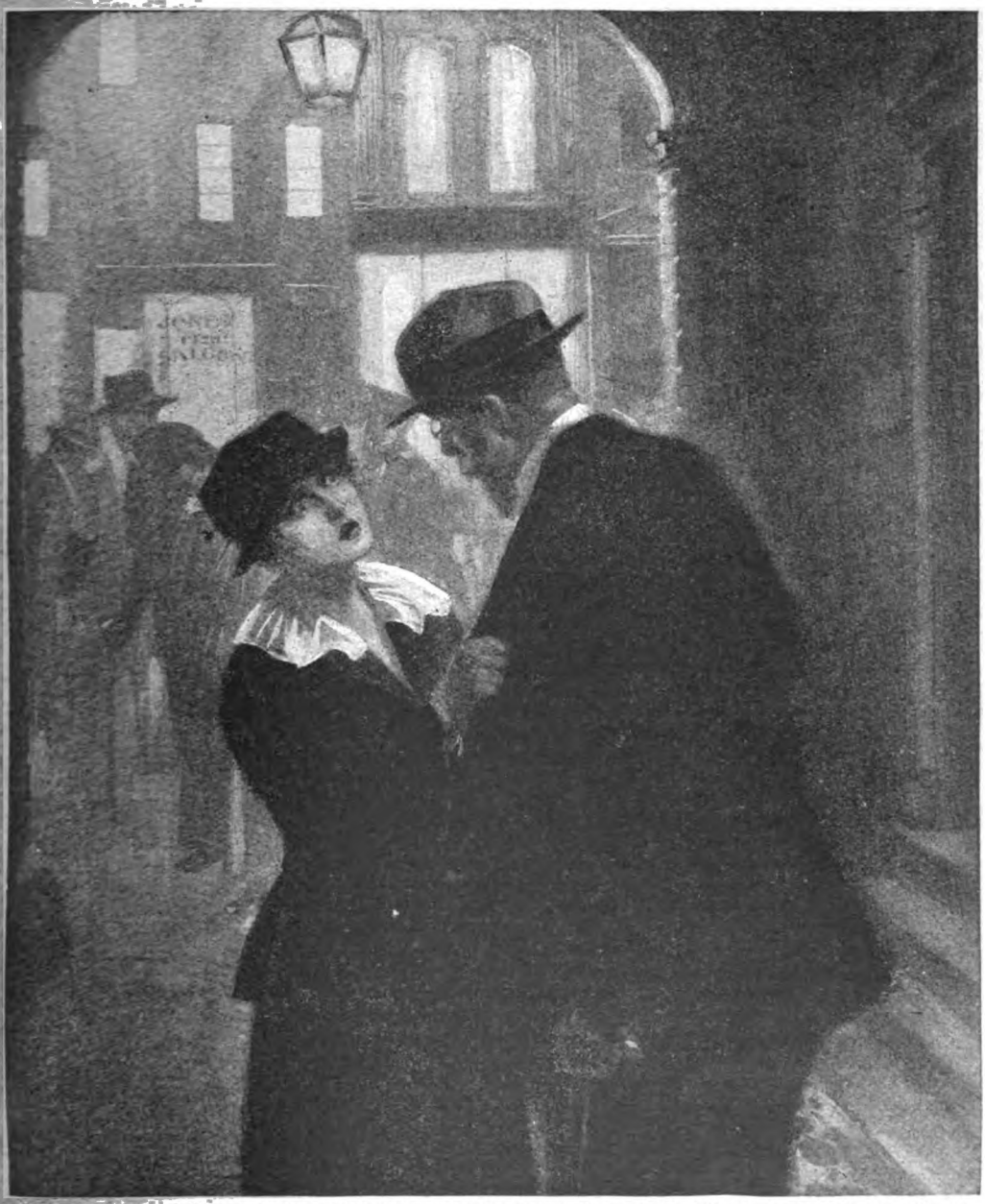
The other laughed shortly and turned away. For a moment Adam watched him; then a thought quite suddenly came to him, a new light shone from behind his wide-rimmed glasses. He slipped quickly out of the cell. When he had turned the key again in the lock his hand went eagerly into his pocket and once more drew forth that disappointing envelope. This time he carefully read the address, nodded his head in recognition of the locality, read it again. Then he suddenly thrust it back into his pocket, bade a jerky "Good day" to the sergeant at his desk, and sped out into the road and away towards Holborn again. At last he was hotly on the trail; his very ears were burning. And at the end of Chancery Lane a poster caught his eye—a poster flourished by a newsboy at the station. He stood for a moment transfixed with pride. For the message he read was:—

"ARREST IN BENTLEY CASE."

Next moment he had darted to the booking-office and was excitedly clamouring for a ticket to Shepherd's Bush.

IV.

He passed the house twice. The old cautiousness was coming back to him. On no account would he have accepted help from the police or from his paper. He meant to see this miracle through alone. Only so would he win the maximum share of glory. And he spent at least five minutes searching his final plan for flaws before at last he went up to the door and knocked. Then he stood stiffly on the doorstep and listened for a footstep. He was disappointed that the lanky girl with paper curlers in her hair, who opened the door at last, looked at him as if he



"NEXT MOMENT SHE WAS HOLDING THE LAPELS OF HIS COAT, HER WHITE FACE WAS LIFTED TO HIM, AND HE FOUND HIS EYES HELD AGAIN BY HERS."

were only some tax-collector. However, he said politely :—

"Mr. Mills lives here ?"

She nodded her head.

"He has sent me to ask for his letters," said Adam. "He will be staying out to-night and he—he rather wants them."

She turned lazily and called "Mother!" up the staircase ; and mother came.

"Gent 'ere wants Mr. Mills's letters."

"Oh!" said she, and looked at him. Adam felt that his fate hung in the balance. He blinked at her.

"Well, I s'pose it's all right," said she. "Are you a friend of Mr. Mills ?"

"Oh, yes," he answered. "I was passing this way and he asked me to call."

"All right," she said. "I'll give it to you. We don't know much about him. He's only been with us a week. From Australia, ain't 'e ?"

"From Australia? Yes," said Adam, and took off his glasses with evident relief and wiped them. "Yes," he said, "from Australia."

She turned away, leaving him for a moment, and he could have shouted for joy. His luck was in. The plan was working. Then, she was coming back. Two—no—one letter in her hand. One only. He held out his hand and grasped it like some Jew who has got the best of a bargain. What would it tell him?

"Thank you very much," he said. "Thank you. Mr. Mills will be obliged." He had turned, was back again on the road; the woman had shut the door behind him. He gave a hurried glance around. Then he feverishly tore open the envelope — drew out a letter written in a feminine hand — plenty of it. And so he stood, just out of sight of the house, with feet astride and his nose glued to the letter, whilst he read right through it.

Gradually his whole expression changed. Then, at the end, he stood very still, rapt eyes uplifted to the skies, and longed to sing, and soon to throw up his hat and cheer, to race shouting down the street. For his plan had borne fruit. At last, at long last, it was all clear before him. The Bentley murder was a mystery no longer. Fame was his. He stood in the road, realized it with a wide ecstatic smile, happy with a new wild happiness that he had never known before, and he laughed to himself, and laughed and laughed and laughed.

Night was falling as he started back. And now he walked majestically with his shoulders braced and all his soul intent on at last confounding those who had mocked him. The Editor would still be at his desk; Bagshaw, with luck, should still be in the building. So he would go to them proudly and tell them his simple facts.

"There," he would say. "Do you believe me now?"

He sped along, deaf, blind to all but the poster that everywhere caught his eye—that boast of the *Evening World*—his paper: "Arrest in Bentley Case."

And suddenly a hand was laid upon his arm; a timid voice was breaking in upon his reverie.

"Excuse me—a minute. Would you let me speak to you, *please?*"

He turned, suddenly pompous; the Successful Man was evident in all his bearings.

"Hey!" said he. "What's that?"

A girl was beside him; her grey eyes were looking into his. He took in swiftly her parted mouth, the little tilted hat shading her face, her smoothly rounded shoulders.

Then her hand had dropped to her side again.

"Would you let me speak to you—a little?" she said. "Please."

Just for a moment Adam hesitated. Perhaps this was further evidence—another name.

"What is it, then?" he said.

"I can't tell you here," said she. "Couldn't we walk away? If you could just spare a few minutes. You—it was you who went away with Mr. Mills this morning, wasn't it?"

Adam's heart jumped. So, already he was known by sight. He nodded briskly.

"I was there," said she, "just coming to meet him. But he didn't know. And when I saw you go up and speak to him I thought you were just a friend and I waited a minute. Then you both walked away. I—I didn't know what to do. He never came back. And now——" she turned and pointed quickly to a poster of the *Evening World*—"they've arrested him—the paper says so—and so I thought it must have been you who took him away. I've waited here all the evening outside the newspaper office trying to catch you. Wasn't it you?"

"Yes," said Adam.

She looked at him. That was all; and he turned away, frowning.

"Won't you come away from this crowd, *please?*" said she. "I do so want to tell you about it."

Only now was he fully conscious of her pallor and the dread anxiety in her deep eyes. He looked at her thoughtfully a moment, made an impatient little gesture. Little did she know how trying was this delay.

"We will walk down here," he said, and pointed to a side street. "We can stand for a moment in a doorway." He laid a hand upon her arm, piloted her across the road, and a little way down the street drew her aside into a courtyard.

"What is it?" he said.

Next moment she was holding the lapels of his coat, her white face was lifted to him, and he found his eyes held again by hers.

"Oh, for the love of Heaven, have pity!" she whispered; "for the love of Heaven! He is all I have left. I—oh, don't you see?—I love him so. And he did it for me."

Adam tried to speak, but his words would scarcely come. He coughed, waited a moment, then at last he said, gruffly:—

"But he murdered a man!"

"He didn't mean to."

"How do you know?" said Adam.

"He couldn't have. He couldn't have. He—he so wanted me. He couldn't have killed a man—deliberately. And he doesn't know that it's all a mistake. He thinks I loved—Bentley. He—he——"

And suddenly her face fell forward into her hands and she was crying. He did not speak. He just looked down at her regretfully.

For the die was cast.

Presently, through her tears, she was speaking again.

"We were engaged," she said, quietly. "He went away to Australia to make money quickly—for *me*—for *me*. D'you understand? Not for himself. And I waited. I had to keep my mother. She was an invalid. I went to a family in society as a governess—a mother's help. But it wasn't enough—for her—and me too. I—I didn't know what to do. She was ill—terribly ill. She needed things. I thought sometimes I should have to steal. Bentley used to come to the house. He was always worrying me. He'd never leave me alone. He used to say, 'Why do you work your fingers to the bone like this

when there are so many other ways ? ' He said, ' Will you come with me one evening ? I make enough money to live like a lord and never do a ha'p'orth of work. And it's all so simple. Cards—just cards. Come with me one evening. I'll show you.' He didn't know how badly I wanted the money, but he kept on worrying, and—and things got desperate. And so at last I went.

" He took me to a club. There were girls there, and ladies, and a lot of men, all gambling and playing cards. I—I felt ashamed. I didn't know what to do. He said, ' Do this—do that—stake here,' and I kept putting on money—some that I'd brought and some he gave me there. He said it would turn my luck. He said I was bound to win if I kept doubling and sticking to it. And I didn't understand. So in the end I stopped. And he said, ' That's very sad. You've lost twenty-seven pounds.'

" I—I nearly fainted. I didn't know what to do."

Adam shifted awkwardly on his feet, and at last she whispered :—

" He paid it for me."

Adam's hand went up to his little beard. All this had been in the letter that he had grabbed so callously and torn open—as evidence. Yet it had not seemed like this—then. She had stated her facts so boldly. It had been just a—case. Now he saw its human side. He did not tell her that he knew it all. He daren't. Somehow he felt far more ashamed than she. And slowly the pomposity and the callousness fell from him and he was Adam Bale again, tender-hearted, much perplexed, embarrassed.

Presently she spoke again. " After that he never let me alone. Whenever he came he worried me. He said he would pay that over and over again for me, if I would give him something in return. And when I turned on him he said that if people knew I'd been there with him my name would never be fair again. And that if I wanted him to be quiet I must do as he wanted. I—I was terrified. And then Jack came home."

" Yes," said Adam, humbly.

She looked up, as if in question as to how much he knew ; waited a moment. But he turned away again. A foolish lump had risen in his throat. No woman had ever before brought her troubles to Adam. Always he had been to them the fool that he was to men. This was a new sensation altogether. No woman's hand had ever rested on his as hers was resting now.

" Jack found out," she said, " somehow, I don't know how. Somebody must have told him. He sought Bentley night and day. I knew he was after him and I said nothing. I was so ashamed. Then he must have met him alone—in the road where they found him—and quarrelled. He—he must have hit him. He was like that—hot-headed. He must have hit him. He couldn't have meant to kill him."

Adam tried to say again " But he did." Yet the words would not come. He stood tongue-tied and looked at her. What could he do ?

" He thinks I'm tired of him " she said. ' That's why he wouldn't run away. He doesn't care if he's hanged or not. But I'm all alone, and I've always loved him—always."

She took him earnestly by the sleeves. Desperation was in her eyes. " Don't you understand—don't you know what it means ? He's all I had left, and you've taken him away."

" No ! " he said, in sudden agonized denial. " No ! I didn't understand. I—I——" He stopped short, hesitated, looked down at her humbly, searching for his words as if he would ask forgiveness.

" I wrote to him yesterday," said she, " but he'll never have any letters now. If he'd known—we could have run away together—just he and I—back to Australia."

" Yes," said Adam, quickly, " you'd be safe there. He'd never be given away. I understand now how it was the police could get no clue. People like those you met at this club would never speak. They have their own names to consider. They never give each other away—never. He'd be safe in Australia."

She looked at him quickly, wide-eyed. But he was speaking as if to himself. And at last he turned and looked at her again. There were tears in her big grey eyes. Just for a moment he looked, and then he knew that everything was different ; knew his ambition had toppled to the ground like a house of cards. What was his fame compared with this girl's happiness and the happiness of her man ? No woman had ever been like this to him.

The thought kept on drumming in his mind. Had love come his way he might not have lived his life a fool. A woman like this might have helped him rise. And now for the sake of a cheap celebrity he was breaking this girl on the rack, branding a strong-armed lover a criminal, cheerfully sending a good man to the gallows just for his own ends, out of his own gross selfishness. He clenched his teeth. Just once more he looked down. Then suddenly, like a tearful child, his hands were seeking hers—had taken them gently.

" Oh, my dear," said he, " I—I—— You shall have him back. I didn't understand. He——"

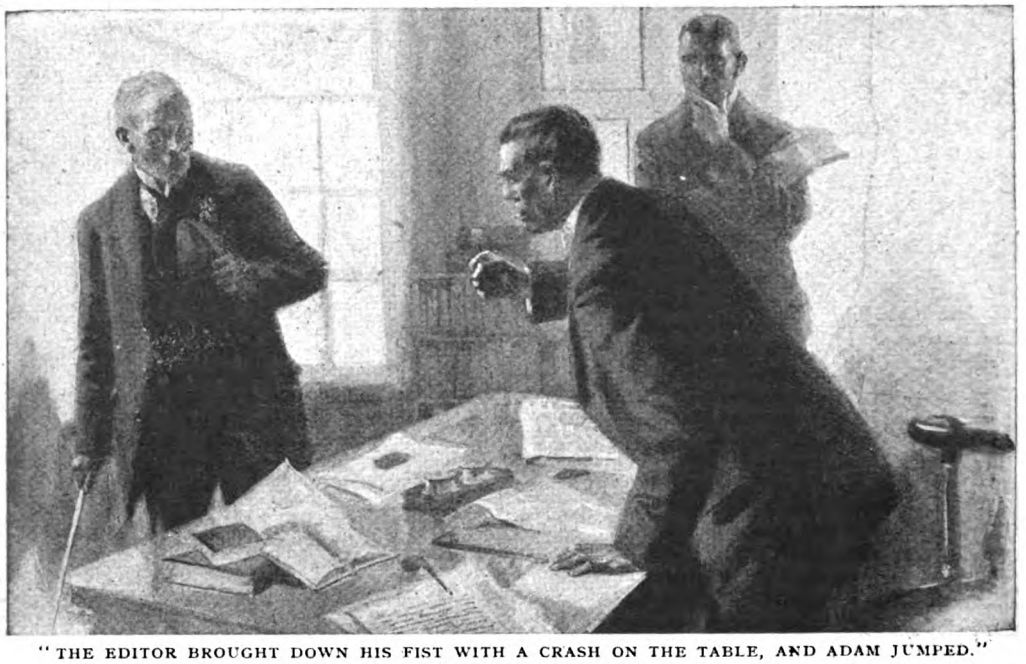
It was the truth. The letter had told him, but not in the same way at all. It needed love in a woman's eyes to bring it all home to him like this. He heard her breath come quickly, heard her trying to speak.

" Oh, I know," he said, brokenly. " Don't try to tell me. I understand. It's—it's nothing. It's quite, quite easy. Nobody will know. But you must make him take you away at once. And hide. Change your names. I'll never give you away, and the others dare not." He hesitated.

" Where will you meet him ? " he asked, suddenly. " I'm going to send him to you. I—I—I can't keep him there in a cell. I want to give him back to you. I—I do understand. I do."

He turned quickly. Sobs were rising in his throat. He felt, and knew himself, a doddering old fool.

" Wait for him at the station," he said—" at Chancery Lane. I'll send him. I'll send him—I promise."



"THE EDITOR BROUGHT DOWN HIS FIST WITH A CRASH ON THE TABLE, AND ADAM JUMPED."

He felt her fingers on his sleeve, paused just a moment to lay his own wrinkled hand on hers—to catch her broken whispers of ecstatic gratitude. Then he was gone.

He went down Fleet Street quickly, his head bowed and his dull eyes blinking behind his wide-rimmed glasses. The brave, triumphant entry appealed to him no longer. He slipped up the staircase, hoping no man would see him.

The Editor was in his room. He knocked and went in.

Bagshaw was standing beside the table, a sheaf of papers in his hand.

"Yes?" said the Editor.

Adam didn't care a bit. God knows how he had wanted more than anything in the world to turn the laugh against them, to make good just once in his life. But he didn't care. He stood up proudly with his head held high—a noble little man.

"I've come to tell you that I was wrong," he said, bravely. "I haven't been able to get any evidence. It was a foolish mistake. It—it's not the man at all."

There came a terrible silence. He still stood stiffly where he was, facing them gallantly. At last a hoarse chuckle broke from Bagshaw. He did not turn his head. The chuckle grew to a laugh. It grated on his tense-strung nerves—he wanted to leap at the Special Correspondent and clutch him by the neck, choking his laugh down his braggart throat. But he stood his ground.

"What?" said the Editor. He got out of his chair and stood behind the table with fierce bent brows and cruel lines round his mouth. "*What?*"

"I have no evidence at all," said Adam, evenly. "The man must go."

The Editor brought down his fist with a crash on the table, and Adam jumped.

"You insufferable little fool!" said the Editor, passionately. "What the blazes do you mean by it, then? How dare you? How dare you, I say! You infernal ass—you blundering ass!"

He paused, then took a deep breath.

"All right," he shouted, "this is the end. Do you understand? I kept you when no other paper in London would use your stuff and you've made a fool of me. Now you can go. Never dare show your face in this office again. Get out! D'you hear? You're sacked!"

Adam turned and went out—down the stairs again into the street. He crammed his faded Trilby hat over his head. It seemed cold. He shivered a little. He didn't care. It was a good deed. For once in his life he was doing right. In ten minutes John Mills would be free. In twenty he would understand; would be holding that little girl against his shoulder—holding her tight.

To-morrow, if luck was with them, they would be out of harm's way. So he reasoned it out. And suddenly, from the dark door of a shuttered shop just round the corner of Fetter Lane, somebody fluttered to his side, a hand was upon his arm—next moment soft lips were against his wrinkles, kissing them—just once.

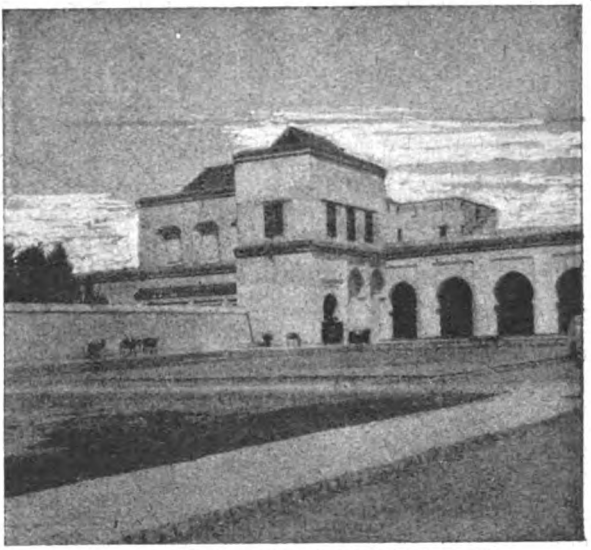
He stopped short, threw out his hand in astonishment. But already she was away; so he turned again with a little laugh. No girl had ever kissed him in his life before. Then he bowed his head again and went stolidly on his way.

SELLING UP A SULTAN.

By

WALTER B. HARRIS.

Illustrated by W. H. Holloway, and with Photographs by the Author.



A COURTYARD OF THE PALACE AT FEZ.

This article reads like a screaming farce—something too impossibly funny to happen. Yet every word of it is absolutely true!

THE year 1912 saw the end of the independence of Morocco, and though there must always be present a regret when something very old and very picturesque disappears, yet on the whole the end of its independence was a matter for congratulation.

Built up originally on the foundation of the religious prestige of its rulers—for the Sultans of Morocco were descendants of the Prophet—the rotten old edifice had stood for many years in a state of imminent collapse. Only its isolation, and the exclusiveness and fanaticism of its people, had postponed its earlier disintegration, and for a long time, in the throes of mortal disease, Morocco had kept up a semblance of life. A young and spendthrift Sultan, Mulai Abdul Aziz, had wasted the revenues of the country and emptied its treasuries—for the greater part on the most useless purchases of European origin. His reign had been the epoch of the *commis-voyageurs*, when caravans converged upon Fez from all the seaports, bearing cages of wild beasts, and the most astounding assortment of every imaginable and unpractical object of luxury and bad taste. It was the time of fireworks and barrel-organs, of fantastic uniforms and beds made of looking-glass, of cameras, and parrots from the Amazons. This expenditure, his association with Europeans, and the weakness with which he administered his government gave rise to a rebellion. His half-brother, Mulai Hafid, proclaimed himself Sultan in the southern capital.

The war between the two Sultans was tedious and uninteresting. The principal object of both seemed to be how to avoid an encounter, and they contented themselves by issuing edicts of mutual excommunication, and, in order to obtain money, by pillaging the tribes regardless of their political opinions. When either Sultan had funds he had also soldiers; failing resources the armies alternately dwindled away almost to the point of disappearance. In fact, both were dependent for troops on the deserters from each other's forces.

At length Mulai Abdul Aziz left Fez for the scene of the rebellion, and marching slowly by a very devious course, so as to avoid any possible encounter with the enemy, he set out for the south. Meanwhile, Mulai Hafid, equally pluckily, set out to conquer the north—also, and for the same reason, by a very devious route. In all probability each would have successfully reached the other's capital without a hitch, if Mulai Abdul Aziz's army, when only a short distance from its goal—Marakesh—had not suddenly pillaged the Imperial

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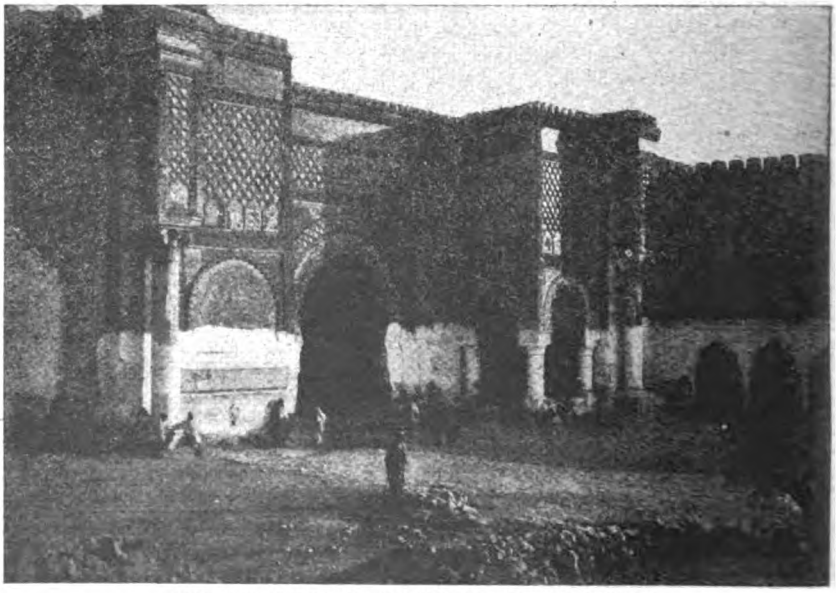
THE SULTAN—SEEN IN THE FOREGROUND ON A WHITE HORSE—ON THE MARCH.

camp, driven the Sultan to seek refuge, after a long and dangerous journey, on the coast, and declared for his rival. A few months later he abdicated in favour of Mulai Hafid, who, with only a few followers, for his army had likewise deserted him, had meanwhile arrived in Fez with little more than the proverbial half-crown in his pocket.

Fez accepted him as Sultan, on the distinct condition that the city was to be exempted from all taxation. This His Majesty solemnly promised, and he kept his promise for a few weeks — until, in fact, he was strong enough to break it—and then he collected taxes, legal and illegal, with gusto never before experienced.

His ability to act thus was owing to his having meanwhile collected a little army. Naturally the treasury was empty, and no tribesmen presented themselves as desiring to take military service, as no pay was forthcoming. The situation was precarious. Without troops Mulai Hafid could do nothing, not even collect the taxes he had promised to forego, and without the taxes he couldn't live. At all costs he must have an army.

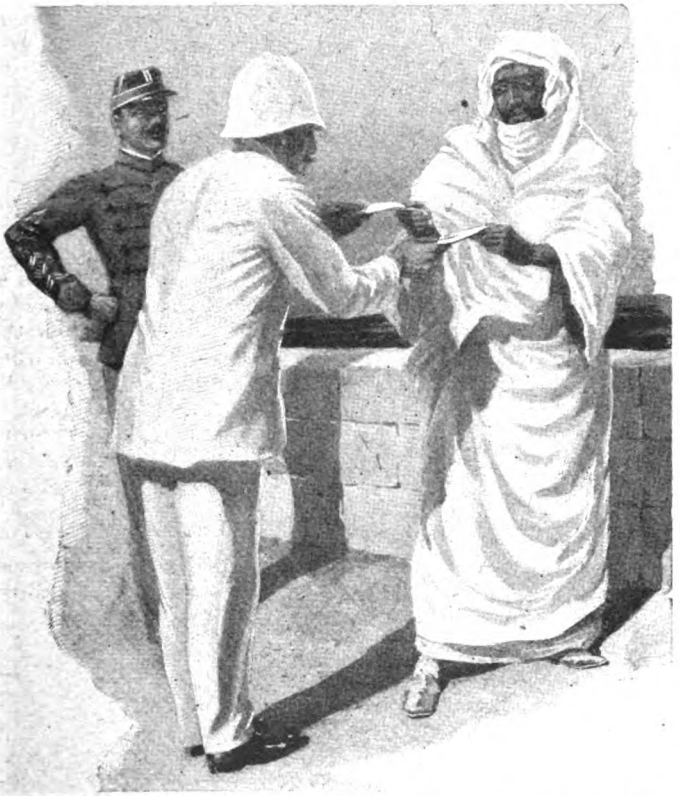
So one day the public criers announced in the streets and market-places that the Sultan was on a certain day giving a great feast at the palace to the adepts of the sect of the "Gennaoua." Now the confraternity of the "Gennaoua" is very popular in Morocco, though—limited almost entirely to the southerners, who are largely of negro extraction, and form a class by themselves of labourers and water-carriers—it is looked upon as unorthodox by the more educated Moors. The Sultan even hinted that he himself had leanings toward their particular doctrine.



THE GREAT GATES AND WALLS OF THE PALACE.

On the day in question the "Gennaoua," washed and in their best clothes, flocked to the palace and entered its great walled courts, surrounded by frowning towers. With every sign of holiday-making and joy they manifested their pleasure at the honour of being invited to the Sultan's religious garden-party—and sought the refreshments. Alas! there were none—nothing but high walls and closed gates—and the next day a sad but resigned army was being drilled on the palace parade ground.

Mulai Hafid was not the man to restore the dying Morocco back to health. Tribes revolted. He himself adopted barbarous methods, and the condition of Morocco became worse than before. In the early months of 1912 the Sultan was besieged by the tribes in Fez. He appealed to the French, already installed at Casablanca, on the Atlantic coast. An expedition was hurriedly dispatched to the capital, which was relieved, and a few weeks later the Treaty of the French Protectorate was signed, to be followed immediately by a massacre of French officers and civilians in Fez. Mulai Hafid's position became impossible, both in the eyes of France and of his own people, and he decided to abdicate. The Court moved to Rabat, on the coast, and there the final scenes of Morocco independence took place. They consisted in the most rapacious bargaining on the part of the Sultan in order to obtain the best possible terms for himself.



"THEY STOOD EACH HOLDING AN END OF THE TWO DOCUMENTS, AND EACH AFRAID TO LET GO OF HIS LEST THE OTHER PAPER SHOULD NOT BE DELIVERED."

Before leaving Fez he had already begun to secure his future comfort in life. He had informed all the Royal ladies of his palace—and they are legion; the widows of former Sultans and a host of female relations—that they must all accompany him to Rabat. He gave them stringent orders as to their luggage. All their jewels and valuables were to be packed in small cases, their clothes and less costly belongings in trunks. They strictly followed these injunctions, but on the day of the Sultan's departure the ladies and the trunks were left behind. They are still in Fez; the jewels, there is reason to believe, are in Europe. Mulai Hafid always prided himself on his business qualities.

The last weeks of his reign were one continual period of wrangling with the French authorities. He was still Sultan, and therefore dangerous, and the question of his successor had not been settled, so he yet held some trump cards, which he played successfully. Even when everything was arranged, and the letters for the proclamation of his younger half-brother, Mulai Yussef, the reigning Sultan, had been dispatched to the interior, Mulai Hafid changed his mind. On reconsideration, he stated, he thought he wouldn't abdicate or leave the country, as had been decided. He had already obtained the most generous terms from the French Government, but the situation was desperate. Instructions had already been circulated in the interior to proclaim the new Sovereign, and the reigning one refused to abdicate. Then Mulai Hafid said that possibly he might be persuaded again to

change his mind. He was, but it cost another forty thousand pounds, which was given him in a cheque as he left the quay at Rabat for the French cruiser that was to take him on a visit to France. In exchange he handed to the French Resident-General the final document of his abdication. The mutual confidence between these two personages was such that for a spell they stood each holding an end of the two documents, and each afraid to let go of his lest the other paper should not be delivered.

The night before the signing of his official abdication Mulai Hafid destroyed the sacred emblems of the Sultanate of Morocco—for he realized that he was the last independent Sovereign of that country, and was determined that with its independence these historical emblems should disappear too. He burnt the crimson parasol which on occasions of state had been borne over his head. The palanquin he hewed in pieces and consigned also to the flames, together with the two cases in which certain holy books were carried. The books themselves he spared. The family jewels he took with him.

From Rabat Mulai Hafid proceeded to France, where, as the guest of the French Government, and travelling in semi-state, he made a protracted tour. At the conclusion of this journey he returned to Tangier, where his immediate family and retainers, in all about one hundred and sixty persons, had meanwhile arrived. The old Kasbah (castle) of Tangier was placed at His Majesty's disposal, and there he took up his residence.

Almost immediately after his arrival at Tangier began the discussion of the terms of his abdication, for only its more general lines had been settled at Rabat, and in a very short time the ex-Sultan's relations with the French were seriously embroiled. Mulai Hafid did not apparently regret having abdicated. He knew that his continued presence on the throne in the actual circumstances was out of the question. What he did regret was that he had not made better terms for himself, and he still hoped to be able to extort more money and more properties. Thus the negotiations were being carried on by him in a spirit of grasping meanness that rendered any solution impossible. At the beginning of his reign, only four years before, he had shown signs of an elevated and patriotic spirit, and really intended to do his best to maintain the independence of the country. But he had quickly realized how impossible his self-set task was. He became unscrupulous, neurasthenic, and cruel. He made enemies on every side—amongst his own people by his barbarities and his extortions, and amongst the Europeans by his cynicism and intransigence.

"HE BURNT THE CRIMSON PARASOL WHICH ON OCCASIONS OF STATE HAD BEEN BORNE OVER HIS HEAD."

So it came about that in a very short time after his arrival in Tangier his relations with the French authorities were strained to breaking point. It was at this moment, when everything seemed almost hopeless, that the writer was asked, independently by both sides, to intervene in the interests of peace.

This invitation to intervene came about as follows. There had been a terrible scene between the ex-Sultan and the French authority charged with the negotiations, and Mulai Hafid had used language so unparliamentary that any further meeting was out of the question.

Early one morning the writer received the visit of a French official, who implored him to become the medium of the conversations and proposals, paying him the compliment of saying that he seemed to be the only person who had any influence over the ex-Sultan, whose conduct was bitterly resented in high quarters.

Scarcely had this person disappeared when the ex-Sultan himself arrived. His nerves appeared to have completely given way and he was in a state of the deepest depression. Throwing himself upon a sofa, and in tears, he poured out all his woes, real and pretended, attacking the French with a vehemence that was as violent as it was unjust. "You," he said to the writer, "seem to be the only person who has any influence upon these villains. Will you continue the negotiations?" In the circumstances there was nothing to do but to accept.

An hour later the conversations had recommenced. The ex-Sultan spent the whole day at the writer's villa, and could scarcely be persuaded to eat or drink. During the writer's absence at the French Legation Mulai Hafid took his departure; and that was not all he took, for he carried away with him the choicest specimens of the writer's Arabic manuscripts. Being of a literary disposition, the temptation of the illuminated books was too great. The writer never saw them again, but it is only fair to state that His Majesty sent a present in exchange the same evening—a gold and enamelled dagger.

During the following weeks the principal points of the negotiations were successfully solved—the question of the pension; funds for the construction of a palace in Tangier; the retention of certain large properties in the interior; and the future of the ex-Sultan's wives and children.

Then came the question of the debts, about which there ensued a long and acrimonious discussion. It had been accepted on principle that all debts that had been incurred directly, and in certain cases indirectly, in the interests of the State should be considered as Governmental debts and be paid by the French Protectorate Government, while all private debts should be settled out of the ex-Sultan's private fortune.

Now this distinction of debts was rendered extremely difficult by the system under which Morocco had been governed. The Sultan of Morocco was always an absolute monarch, and as such the revenues of the country were his. There had never been any distinction between public funds and private funds—all belonged to the Sultan. As a rule, the expenses of the State, as well as the palace upkeep, were paid by bills drawn upon the Custom-houses of the coast. It was therefore no easy task to arrive at an agreement as to what were State and what private debts, so inextricably mixed had they been in the past.

There was, for instance, a bill for a fine marble staircase, ordered in Italy for the palace at Fez. The French authorities argued that this very expensive staircase was merely a piece of wild extravagance on the part of Mulai Hafid, and that accordingly he ought to pay for it. The ex-Sultan, on the contrary, insisted that the palace was the property of the State—he had argued just the other way when he had been called upon to explain why he had brought away with him certain valuable fixtures—and that any additions and improvements he had made to it were all to the advantage and interest of the State. It was, he said, his successor, and not he himself, who would benefit by the marble staircase. The Protectorate Government allowed the justice of this argument and paid the bill.

The sequel to this incident is worth the telling. A few months later, when the ex-Sultan was signing the contract for the construction of his new palace at Tangier, he eliminated one of the several marble staircases marked in the plan. He had, he said, a very superior marble staircase which would do admirably in its place. The writer ventured to ask if it was the same one about which there had been so much discussion. "It is," replied Mulai Hafid. "You see, it had not yet left Italy, so I telegraphed and had it delivered here instead of being sent to Fez."

A still more complicated claim was for some hundreds of yards of very expensive and very fine crimson cloth. Naturally the Protectorate authorities scheduled this amongst the private debts. The Sultan protested. The cloth, he said, had been purchased for Governmental

purposes—in fact, for the trousers of the Imperial kitchen-maids, for there are several hundred slave-women employed in preparing the palace food. The Protectorate Government refused to be responsible for this debt. The ex-Sultan drew up an historical treatise to prove that Imperial kitchen-maids were part and parcel of the State, and passed, like the palace itself, from Sultan to Sultan. The principle was accepted, but the debt was disallowed on the ground that these good ladies did not require such expensive stuff for their nether garments. A cotton material, they argued, would have equally well served the purpose. The Sultan's reply was unanswerable and crushing. "In Europe," he said, "it may be the custom for the Imperial kitchen-maids to wear cotton trousers, but in Morocco we have more appreciation of the dignity of their position."

There was nothing more to be said. The debt was paid by the Protectorate Government.

The long discussions which the writer, practically unaided, had to maintain with the Sultan were not always facilitated by the surroundings in which they took place. There were no regular business hours for these conversations, or for the examination of the voluminous documents which they often necessitated, and which were always in the wildest disorder, but which none the less required a careful perusal. Whenever and wherever His Majesty felt inclined he would burst out with his grievances, and as at all costs he had to be kept apart from the French authorities, the whole storm used often to fall on the writer's head. At times the ex-Sultan, struck by a brilliant idea how to escape the payment of some small sum, would arrive at the writer's villa at dawn; at others, the writer was hastily summoned to the palace at midnight. The debts were discussed and argued over in every possible situation, and anyone present, native or European, high authority or slave, was dragged into the discussion. There were two aged ladies whose opinion was constantly asked. One was an old black slave-nurse, the other a Berber woman, quite white, who was the Sultan's soothsayer and fortune-teller. Her advice was always good and to the point, and she never hesitated to tell the ex-Sultan that he was acting foolishly when occasion required, and she rendered distinct services toward the unravelling of these complicated questions.

Sometimes it was when seated on mattresses and rugs in a garden, surrounded by his slaves, that Mulai Hafid would argue that all debts were State debts, and that private property never had legally existed, and that individual responsibility—especially for debts—was contrary to the highest principles of divine nature. He discoursed with great facility and great literary ability. He had a classical Arabic quotation at hand—often most skilfully misquoted—to prove his every argument. He could persuade others quickly, and himself at once. Leaning slightly forward, swathed in his soft white robes, he would speak slowly and with great distinctness and charm, with an accompanying slow movement of his right hand; and then in the middle of it all his attention would be attracted by his elephants or his llamas, or a group of cranes that would come wandering out of the shrubberies and turn his thoughts and his conversation into new channels.

While the two elephants were being brought from Fez to Tangier at the time of the abdication, one of them escaped on the road, and being an unknown beast to the villagers of the countryside, it met with many adventures. Wherever it appeared arose panic and consternation, and the whole male population turned out with such weapons as they could lay their hands on to drive away this terrible and unknown beast. The country population however, possessed little but very primitive firearms, whose range was short and whose bullets dropped harmlessly off the sides and back of the huge pachyderm—thereby increasing the panic. The elephant, luxuriating in the spring crops, grazed undisturbed while, from as near as they dared to approach, the outraged proprietors poured volleys against its unheeding bulk. But one day it found itself on the road again, and came rolling along into Tangier none the worse, but remarkably spotted all over with the marks of spent bullets.

There were other occasions when the conversations were in less pleasant places than the gardens. There was a room, for instance, in a hideous villa, that Mulai Hafid had bought as it stood, and greatly admired, that seemed haunted by the microbe of irritability. Not only was its decoration appalling, but it was full of a host of objects which the ex-Sultan had brought from Fez, amongst them innumerable musical-boxes, clocks of every shape and form—he evidently particularly fancied a kind made in the shape of a locomotive engine in coloured metals, the wheels of which all turned round at the hours, half-hours, and quarters, for they were in dozens almost—and mechanical toys. Everything, or nearly everything, was

"THE WHOLE MALE POPULATION TURNED OUT WITH SUCH WEAPONS AS THEY COULD LAY THEIR HANDS ON TO DRIVE AWAY THIS TERRIBLE AND UNKNOWN BEAST."

broken, and an Italian watchmaker was employed in trying to sort out the wheels, bells, and other internal arrangements of this damaged collection of rubbish. It was in this room that he had set up his workshop, and nothing pleased Mulai Hafid more than to sit and watch him.

Now, it was not unseldom the writer's duty to break to the ex-Sultan that the French authorities refused to pay such and such a debt. With all Oriental autocrats it is best to break bad news gently, for they are usually wanting in self-restraint, and are not accustomed to blunt facts. Often it required considerable time, and a neatly expressed argument, couched in Arabic at once diplomatic and literary, to carry out the task successfully and escape an access of temper. The writer would begin with a little discourse on the origin of revenues, the ex-Sultan would listen attentively, and then just as the moment arrived to bring generalities into line with actual facts, the Italian watchmaker would meet with an unexpected success. Clocks would begin to strike and chime, or a musical-box, old and wheezy, to play, or an almost featherless stuffed canary in a cage would utter piercing notes in a voice that moth and rust had terribly corrupted; or from near the Italian's chair some groaning mechanical toy would crawl its unnatural course over the carpet, eventually to turn over on its back and apparently expire in a whiz of unoiled wheels. The ex-Sultan's attention would stray. There was an end of business, and it generally led to the ordering of a meal to be served to everyone—at any hour and on any excuse—at which the watchmaker, who might have only just finished a repast, was the guest of honour and was forced to eat incredible quantities of very rich, but very excellent, food. And what was left of the Royal repast was handed out of the windows and served to the slaves and gardeners.

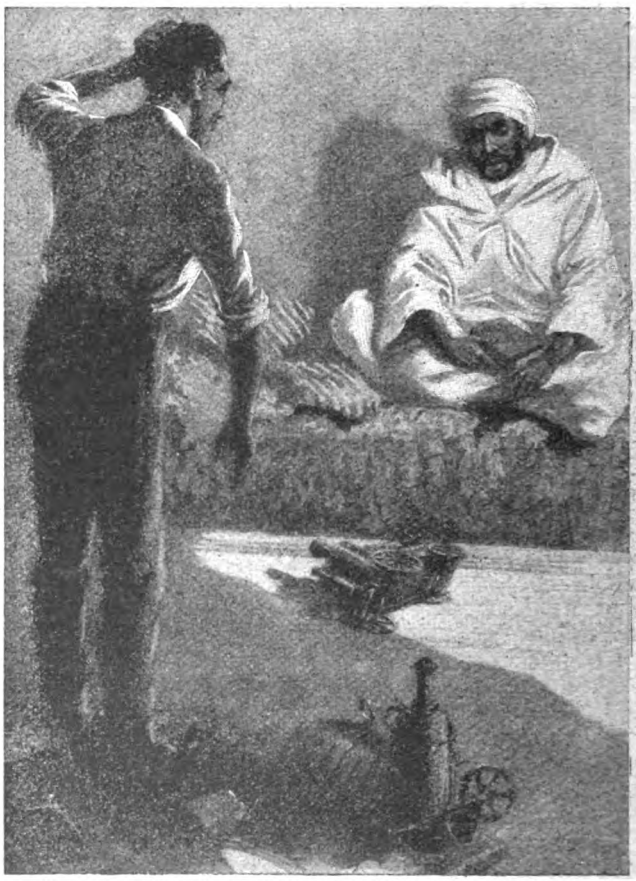
Perhaps the most difficult claim to settle was that of the Sultan's Spanish dentist; for not only was it extremely complicated, but it also became almost international. It might naturally be supposed that the dentist's bill was for professional services—but no; it was for a live lion. In the early days of his reign the Sultan had engaged the dentist at a regular stipend, and he had become a permanent member of His Majesty's household. For a time he was kept busy patching up the mouths of the Court, but the task was at length accomplished and the ladies' teeth glistened with gold. The dentist remained unemployed.

Now there is no possible reason in the world why dentists shouldn't be employed to buy lions. It is not, of course, usual, and so sounds incongruous. In Morocco views as to

the limitations of professions are much less restricted than with us. In Mulai Abdul Aziz's time, a very few years ago, one of the duties of the Scotch Court piper was to feed the kangaroos; the professional photographer made scones; a high military authority supplied the Sultan's ladies with underlinen; and the gardener from Kew was entrusted with the very difficult task of teaching macaw parrots to swear. And so it was not surprising that the dentist became a buyer of lions.

In the first flush of his success at the beginning of his reign, Mulai Hafid was setting himself up as an orthodox Sovereign by Divine Right—and this necessitated a menagerie. It is one of the attributes of Royalty which has almost disappeared except in the East, though at one time universal. It is perhaps fortunate. The hurried entrance of an excited rhinoceros amongst the guests at a garden-party at Windsor Castle would prove embarrassing—and so, to a lesser degree, would be the presence of a hyæna at the evening service at St. George's Chapel; but at Morocco similar incidents would have attracted little or no attention. The father of Mulai Hafid, Mulai Hassen, allowed his tame leopards to roam about his reception-rooms, but his son, more timid by nature, confined the leopards in cages and replaced them in his drawing-room by guinea-pigs. The effect lost in majesty, but the afternoon callers were less nervous.

So the dentist was sent to Hamburg to buy wild beasts from Hagenbeck. But he erred. He should have returned with the menagerie and shared its glory. He delayed, and when he arrived in Fez a few months later the novelty and glamour of the wild beasts was passed, and the reception that he and the belated and unpaid-for lion—the last of the series of lions—met with was by no means enthusiastic. Mulai Hafid had discovered that the upkeep of so many sheep-eating beasts was expensive, as the tribes, on the eve of revolt, refused to supply the sheep, and insultingly demanded payment.



"SOME GROANING MECHANICAL TOY WOULD CRAWL ITS UNNATURAL COURSE OVER THE CARPET."

So far the claim presented no insurmountable difficulties, but there were complications, for the Sultan, immensely attracted by the mechanism of the dentist's operating-chair, had some time previously ordered from the dentist, and paid for, a throne to be constructed on the same mechanical principles. This throne had never been supplied, so there was a counter-claim. The Sultan stated that he had paid for the lion, or, if he hadn't, then it was a State debt, for which he was not responsible, and demanded the delivery of his mechanical throne. The question was still under discussion when the term of the dentist's contract expired, and the ex-Sultan notified him that it would not be renewed. But the dentist held a trump card, for the ex-Sultan had lodged him, rent free, in a little villa situated on one of His Majesty's Tangier properties. The dentist refused to quit, and the Spanish

authorities upheld him, for by the capitulations each Power protects the interest of its respective subjects. A body of slaves were sent to eject him. They found the villa barricaded, and were met with pistol-shots. The complications were becoming serious and international in character. The Sultan, the French authorities, the Spanish dentist, the black slaves, the writer, a British subject, and the German lion threatened to cause annoyance to the Governments of Europe if recourse was made to firearms. The writer made an impassioned prayer for conciliation on everyone's part. After much delay and no little difficulty, an interview was arranged between the ex-Sultan and the dentist, at which as mediator the writer was to be present. Each was studiously coached in the part he was to play. The dentist's plaintive appeals to the generosity of the ex-Sovereign were carefully rehearsed, as were also the Sovereign's "gracious reply," while the writer's little speech on the blessing of brotherly love was a gem of the first quality.

"THE DENTIST WAS, STRUGGLING AND SHOUTING, REMOVED FROM THE PRESENCE CHAMBER."

Mulai Hafid was seated on a divan studiously reading a book, when the dentist entered and made his obeisance; this obeisance, polite but intentionally curtailed, did not meet with His Majesty's approval. Instead of, as arranged, smilingly acknowledging the dentist's salutation, the ex-Sultan continued reading half aloud in a sing-song drawl.

A long period ensued, broken by one of the suite, who said, "My lord the king, the dentist is here."

Without raising his eyes from his book the ex-Sultan asked in the softest of voices:—

"Has he brought my mechanical throne?"

Now that wasn't on the programme at all. There was to have been no mention of such distressing objects as dentist-chair thrones or lions. There was to have been purely and simply a reconciliation, a sum of money promised to the dentist if he would quit the villa, and a general abandonment of claim and counter-claim. But, alas! before anyone could intervene the dentist had shouted out:—

"Pay me for my lion!"

And then the fat was in the fire For some moments the atmosphere boiled with vituperative allusions to lions and dentist-chair thrones, until, while the writer restrained the infuriated potentate, the dentist was, struggling and shouting, removed from the presence chamber

By dint of great persuasion the writer eventually brought about a settlement. The Sultan did not get his throne, nor did he pay for the lion, which the Protectorate Government took over, not having been informed that it had meanwhile died. The dentist received a sum of money in payment of all his claims. The writer, whose solution it was, got the thanks of none of them, all three parties concerned expressing themselves as dissatisfied with the settlement reached.

A PLAIN MAN.

By J. SACKVILLE MARTIN.

Illustrated by C. M. Padday.

WHEN the ship went down beneath him—the old cargo tramp which he had sailed so long and loved so well—John Gosforth experienced a feeling that was something far more than fear for himself—something that was like the regret he might have felt at the loss of a very dear friend, or even a wife. But this little bit of sentiment did not last very long; for he was a plain man and little given to sentiment. It gave way, therefore, quickly enough to the stern realities of the position. The explosion had been a violent one. The ship had been torn in two. There had just been a milk-white track along which the torpedo had run, and then destruction. In less than two minutes he found himself struggling in the waters of the North Sea.

Bitterly cold they were, with a nasty choppy sea that smacked his cheek as he swam and caused his eyes to smart and filled his mouth and nostrils with the salt water. He was no great swimmer. He had only just had time to kick his sea-boots off, and his pilot-jacket weighed more than he had ever thought it could weigh. He wondered how long he would be able to float. He wondered whether any help was near. He tried to look about him as he rose to the crest of the waves, but though he got a hasty glimpse or two he could see nothing. He wondered what it would really be like to die, and how his wife and the two kids would get along without him. It was hard on a man who was only thirty-eight and married only five years to have to give up his happiness and leave the missus and the youngsters to the mercy of Providence. He supposed she would manage somehow. She was a capable woman, and not one to sit down under a blow—even such a blow as this would be. But it was maddening to think that she would have to try. Well, he would swim as long as he could. He could do no more.

And then beneath him he felt something solid; something firm and dependable, raising him up. He clutched at it desperately. It was metal—smooth, wet metal, and as it emerged he recognized it. He was clinging to the hogged back of the submarine; the submarine which had sunk him. He did not doubt it. He recognized her as a German. He had seen pictures of the type. Moreover, the letter "U" and the number "16" were painted on her conning-tower. He could see them from the spot on which he rested.

In every sense of the word the position was an uncomfortable one; only a degree better, in fact, than that from which he had just been rescued. At the best, he might look to become a German prisoner. At the worst, they might push him off to drown. The latter was no idle fear. The brutes were capable of anything.

And now that the submarine had come to the surface, what was she going to do? If she dived, he would be washed off. If she remained on the surface, no doubt the men within her would come out. Was there no help at all? Casting his eyes around him once more, he perceived a faint trail of smoke away to the northward. The sight gave him a momentary hope and stimulated his brain to activity. There must be some sort of a trap-door for the crew to gain the deck. Suppose he were to reach it and find some way of jamming it? He would have them like rats in a trap. True, they could submerge and shake him off. But after that they would have to grope about by the aid of their periscope; and possibly he might damage that. At least he could try. He stood upright a moment, and then, thankful that the loss of his boots allowed him to move without noise, he stole towards the conning-tower.

He found the trap-door—a circular piece of steel let into the deck and fitting it very closely. It presented nothing but a plain flat surface. There was nothing to get a grip of, nothing to handle. He realized his helplessness and was filled with a great

"HE SEIZED THE MAN BY THE THROAT AND DRAGGED HIM BACKWARDS."

disappointment. He was cold and shivering. Inside the submarine there would be light and comparative warmth. He was tempted to knock, to make his presence known, to give himself up as prisoner, since it seemed he could do nothing. But that trail of smoke to the nor'ard had become a regular plume, and by the rate it was travelling he suspected a torpedo-destroyer. If he could not do anything to damage the enemy, at least he would hang on and see if anything came of this chance of help, if help it should prove to be.

And then the luck favoured him. The trap-door opened and a man's head and shoulders emerged. The man was looking directly away from him and was not aware of his presence. He jumped at the chance. He seized the man by the throat and dragged him backwards, pulling his body over at a right angle so that his victim was practically helpless. There was a stifled exclamation, a choking noise, and a succession of violent struggles. But John Gosforth held on grimly, keeping his captive in the position in which he had made him a prisoner. No one should either close that trap or get out of it whilst he could help it.

Someone below tugged viciously at the legs of the man he held. John Gosforth held on. After two minutes' pull-devil, pull-baker, during which the animated rope of this tug-of-war groaned incessantly through rapidly blackening lips, those below changed their tactics and tried to push their comrade out. John Gosforth resisted this also. An angry buzz of voices came up from below. Then

at length one spoke—clearly, emphatically, and in English.

"Who are you?" it asked. "And what the devil are you doing there?"

The words gave John Gosforth an unpleasant shock. Nevertheless, the evidence was not clear enough. It might be a ruse.

"Never you mind who I am," he said, "except that I'm an Englishman. That ought to be enough for you."

"Quite enough," answered the voice, after a momentary pause, "for we're English all."

John Gosforth had another shock. There was no trace of a foreign accent.

"It would be a bit of a risk for me if I was to make any mistake," he answered. "And some of you chaps—murdering villains as you are—speak English quite well enough to take in a plain man like me. I've got to be certain first. Now this chap that I've got here—can he speak English? He doesn't look English. I'll try him, at any rate."

He loosened his hands a little from his prisoner's throat, taking care to stand by to tighten them, lest he should lose his advantage. But his victim was unconscious; black in the face and breathing stertorously. He could take no advantage. But neither was there any information to be got out of him.

Again the voice came up from below—clear and cold and with more than a suspicion of annoyance in it. "Idiot!" it said, "I tell you we're English. What makes you think we're not?"

"Well, because you've sunk my ship, for one thing," answered the plain man, plainly.

"We haven't sunk any ship," replied the voice, in tones of exasperation.

"Then, again, you've a 'U' painted on you—like a German," replied John Gosforth, keeping a steady hold of the man half through the trap-door.

"That's all right," answered the voice, sharply. "We took this boat from the Germans. We're hanging round here to see if we can't work the confidence trick on them—and bag another. Hang it, man, don't be so suspicious. What are you?—a Yorkshireman? Well, you're a canny lot, but you can carry canniness too far."

John Gosforth was puzzled. It was really difficult to know what to do. He looked at what had been the smudge to the nor'ard. It was now a four-funnelled destroyer running south at a speed that sent a white curl of water high over its bows. It would pass close, he thought, but not close enough. It might miss him altogether. And then the man below was very convincing. That reference to Yorkshire, for example! Perhaps he *was* making a fool of himself.

"I'm a plain man," he said, cautiously. "Don't you try any tricks on me."

"We wouldn't dream of it," replied the voice, with a suspicion of sarcasm. "But do make up your mind and come in. You're strangling—er—poor old James."

"What do you want me to do?" asked Gosforth, slowly.

"To let me bring my friend in," answered the voice, "and then come in and see for yourself. You must be a bit wet and cold up there."

"All right!" answered Gosforth, after another pause. "I'll risk it. I may have been a bit slow about it, but one has to be careful. You can't blame me. I'll chance it, anyway."

He let go his victim, who was immediately dragged down. He himself followed, going carefully down the steel rungs of a polished ladder. As he descended, encircling arms gripped his legs helpfully, then his body, more firmly but less helpfully, and when he reached the bottom, he found himself a prisoner, staring about him at a group of men who even to his uninstructed eyes were obviously not English.

Any lingering doubts on the subject were put at rest when they began to speak. Two of them bent over their prostrate comrade, who had not yet recovered from his misadventure, and endeavoured to restore him to consciousness. Two others pinned John Gosforth's arms behind him, whilst a third, from his dress the officer in command, stared hard at him, turning now and then to speak harshly in German to his lieutenant, who, answering in the same language, now and again addressed Gosforth in English as correct and precise as he had used whilst still unseen.

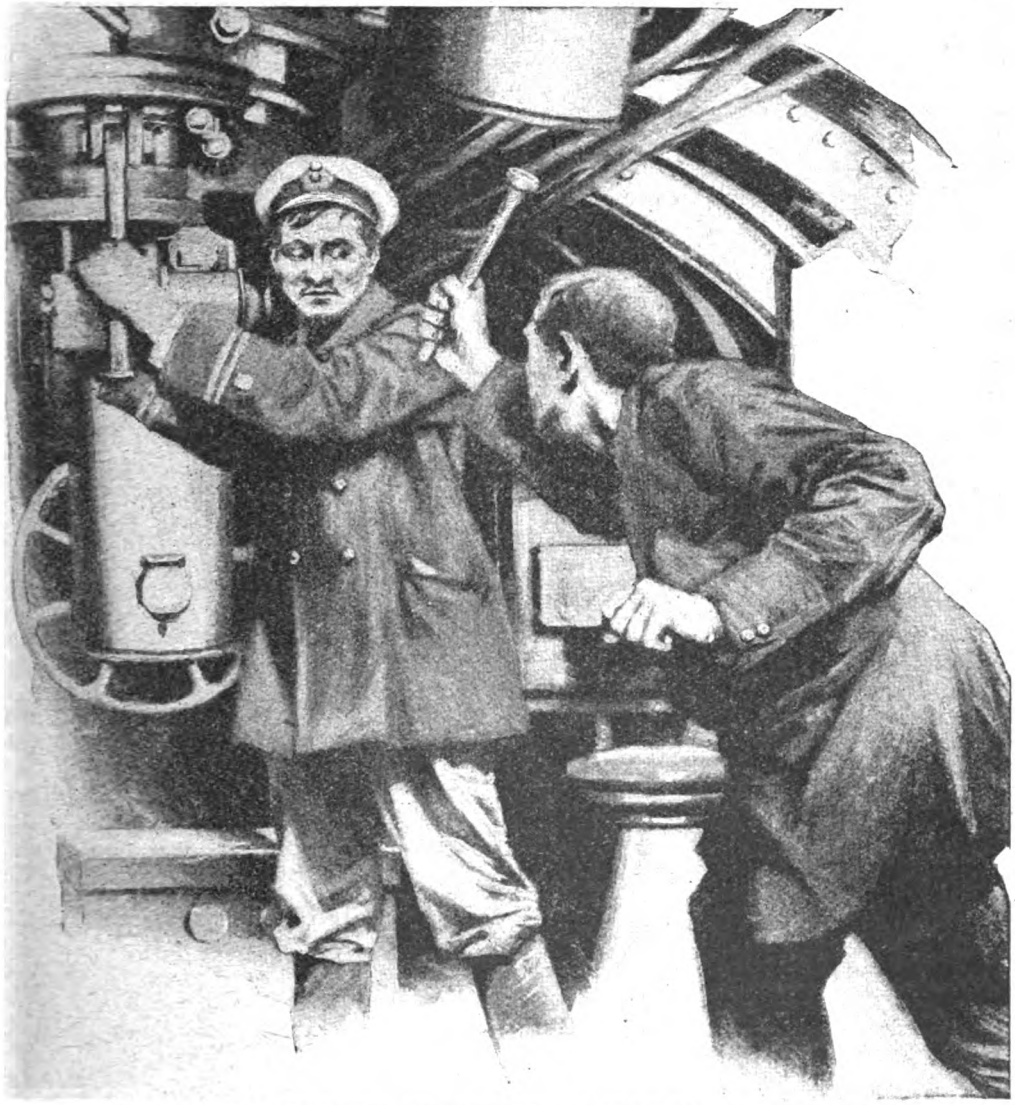
"Well, my British friend," he said, with a slight grin. "We had trouble enough to get you, but got you we have. And now that we have got you we don't intend to let you go in a hurry—except perhaps into the sea. Exactly what we do with you will depend on the answers you have to give us to the one or two simple questions we have to ask you."

"Ask away," answered Gosforth, bluntly.

"What ship was that we torpedoed just now?"

"My ship," answered Gosforth, "the *Jane Riggs*, of Hartlepool."

"You were her master?"



"WITH A YELL, HE PICKED UP THE BOLT AND MADE FOR THE PERISCOPE."

"I was—for more years than I like to remember."

"Cargo?"

"Coals—to Newcastle," replied Gosforth, with a grin.

"You had better not play with us," answered the lieutenant, unpleasantly. "I know your English funny expressions, remember."

"I wasn't being funny," answered Gosforth. "I'm a plain man. We were carrying coals and we were going to Newcastle. I can't tell you anything else."

Mentally he salved his conscience with the reflection that he had had coal on board; for the furnaces at least, if not as cargo.

"Where have you come from?"

But this time John Gosforth shut his lips. He had come from a naval port in the south and saw that the questions were becoming more intimate.

"I don't know that I'm called on to answer that," he said, after a pause.

"You are called on to answer anything we ask you," replied the German, with an explosion of fury. "You're not very far from the sea, remember."

"I know that," said Gosforth, obstinately. "All the same, I sha'n't answer you."

He was wondering how far off the destroyer was, and if she had seen her danger.

"You refuse, then?" said the German.

"I do," replied Gosforth, bluntly. "I don't see what else you could expect. You can answer your own questions if you want answers."

The English-speaking lieutenant turned towards his superior and spoke in his own language. The reply was brusque and was accompanied by an upward wave of the hand. The lieutenant translated.

"We're going to take you on deck and put you over," he said. "You will have a minute or two to think over your decision."

John Gosforth looked about him at the determined faces of his foes and felt his heart stand still. But he never hesitated. He had seen things at the port from which he had sailed that he did not intend to speak about. Sooner or later there would come a question that he could not answer. Better sooner than later; for elaborate cross-questioning might lead him into an admission he did not wish to make.

"I've nothing to think over," he said. "I've done my thinking."

The man went rapidly up the ladder and through the trap into the conning-tower. A moment later he came down again, speaking excitedly in German. The commander ran to the eye-piece of the periscope. Gosforth watched him jealously. All about him was the complicated mechanism that moved the deadly thing in which he was a prisoner. The trap-door was shut and there was a sound of water entering the ballast tanks. The men ran to their various stations, all except two who still held him fast. The submarine began to dive. A little for'ard of him, a group of men stood by a torpedo-tube, watching their commander. It was evident that they only awaited his signal to fire.

"We've bagged you," said the English-speaking lieutenant, as he passed to his place. "Now we're going to bag someone else—a destroyer this time. Better game than you were, my friend."

Then there fell a silence. Nothing could be heard but the purr of the motors that drove the boat along. The men's faces looked strained in the clear electric light. At the periscope the commander and the lieutenant stood, intent and watchful. At last there came a sharp word of command. The men by the torpedo-tube sprang to attention. John Gosforth saw that the moment was at hand. He could bear it no longer. He was a plain man and saw his duty plainly. His eye travelled to a steel bolt that lay at his feet. The tension of the moment had had its effect on the men who were guarding him. They held him slackly and their eyes were fixed upon the group about the torpedo-tube. By a violent effort he wrenched himself free. With a yell, he picked up the bolt and made for the periscope, striking out at the commander, at his lieutenant—at everything he could reach in his excitement.

He poured out a volley of language that he would have blushed to use in calmer moments; for he was of chapel-going folk and, as a rule, careful as to what he said.

The commander swore vigorously in German. His subordinate, alternately in German and English. Most fortunately for Gosforth, neither man carried his revolver. Five of the crew hurried up and flung themselves upon him. He went down among them, fighting blindly; but not before he had had time to see a tiny picture—the picture of a four-funnelled destroyer seen in the periscope, with two delicate crossed lines intersecting each other over her. He caught sight of a puff of white smoke from her side. Then, strangely, inexplicably, the picture went out, and he fell to the floor with the men on top of him. What had happened, really, was that in the few seconds of delay which his action had gained the destroyer's gun had been fired, and the torpedo had not.

When they brought him to his feet again there was a change in their expressions—a marked change in the expressions of the commander and his lieutenant. No more light came through the periscope, and the crew were very silent. Only the two officers conversed in excited sentences. And as this time the lieutenant did not choose to translate, John Gosforth had no idea of what they were saying. But hope set his heart beating wildly.

It seemed too good to be true—and yet it was true. The shot from the destroyer had carried away the periscope, and the submarine, rendered blind, was going to rise. It was odds that whilst there she would be at the mercy of her antagonist. Not a word was spoken. The men still stood by the torpedo-tubes, but their attitude of confident alertness was gone.

"Your friends seem to have got in on us," said the lieutenant, looking at Gosforth, grimly. "But you'd better not be too cock-sure for all that. We've still one or two surprises for you—and for them—if they give us time."

"You behave yourselves, and I'll say what I can for you when you're prisoners," replied

"HE SEIZED THE HAND OF THE NEAREST BLUEJACKET AND SHOOK IT WARMLY."

Gosforth, unable to suppress his feelings—"though I'm dashed if I think you deserve it!"

Before long it became evident that the submarine was awash. The commander passed up into the conning-tower. Possibly he hoped to fire a torpedo before he was observed. But the destroyer was on the alert, and a perfect hail of shell flew around him. Two or three shots pierced the submarine's sides and the water began to pour in. He shouted down the hatch ordering all hands to go on deck. One after another they followed each other up the ladder. Last of all came Gosforth.

When he emerged on deck he saw that the fight—if it could be called a fight—was over. The destroyer was circling about them. The submarine was sinking beneath his feet. Her crew were holding up their hands in token of surrender. One after another they were taken off and made prisoners. Last of all again came Gosforth. In his joy at finding himself once more upon a British deck he seized the hand of the nearest bluejacket and shook it warmly.

"What in thunder!" began the bluejacket. "What game are you up to now, you blooming Hun?"

"Blooming Hun yourself!" answered Gosforth. "I'm a plain man and a true-blue Englishman. These fellows sank my ship—and one way or another they got me on board that tank of theirs. I reckon they're sorry they did it now. For if it hadn't been for me you fellows might have found yourselves in the same fix as I was an hour ago."

Before the commander he told his story. The commander listened appreciatively.

"You've been seeing life," he said, shortly. "I don't question your yarn in the least. Going for those chaps in the way you did was plucky—damned plucky! It was foolish, mind you. You're lucky to be alive, and some men wouldn't have risked it. What made you do it?—patriotism, or any of that sort of thing—what?"

John Gosforth—the plain man—thought things over plainly.

"You can call it patriotism if you like," he said, slowly. "As a matter of fact, I saw myself in Germany until the end of the war—and I wanted to get back to my wife."

"THE LEADIN' MEN BEIN' ONCE PICKED, THE BATTLE BEGAN WITH A GOOD DEAL AV SPIRIT ON BOTH SIDES."

THE SAUCEPAN.

By LYNN DOYLE,

Author of "Mr. Wildridge of the Bank."

Illustrated by Thomas Henry.

"THE childher about Ballygullion," said Mr. Patrick Murphy, "is just like the childher everywhere else: they're terrible fond av imitatin' their eldhers. An' wheniver the Orangemen marches out av the town on the Twelfth av July, an' you're beginnin' to think ye'll get a bit av peace for your ears till they're comin' home again, out comes every wee fellow that can get hould av an ould tin can an' batthers about till folks is near deaved.

"I need hardly tell you, too, that them that stays behind in Ballygullion on the Twelfth is not av the persuasion that's likely to thole it the best.

"However, it's like Christmas an' only comes once a year; an' as the one day does it, they put up wi' it the best way they can.

"But about four or five years ago a lot av wee boys took the notion that it was a pity not to have more av a good thing; an' a party av Orangemen settin' out on the Thirteenth for the sham fight at Scarva, nothin' would do the childher but they'd have a sham fight av their own at home.

"It might ha' done all right, an' lasted to this day, if they'd kept it among their own sort; but wee Billy Black's son, that started the idea, thought it would give a kind av reality to the whole affair if they had some av the other side to do King James's men. An' so it did, an' a thrifle more than some av them expected.

"There wasn't much throuble gettin' up the sides. Wee Black's army was easy gathered, for most av them had got a holiday; an' wi' the other fellows keen to keep up the honour av the Irish, an' maybe seein' a chance av gettin' their own back afther all they'd tholed the day before, enough av thim mitched from school to make up brave an' near as many to fight for King James.

"The two armies took up their positions on each side av the wee river at the bottom av Ballygullion, both av them rigged out in great style, wi' belts an' wooden swords an' paper helmets on them. Billy Black's wee son, as bein' the one that got up the fun, couldn't be kept out av bein' King William, especially as he'd borrowed ould John Linchey's donkey to do the white horse; an' Murray the pawnbroker's wee fellow got doin' Schomberg on account av an ould horse-pistol an' a handful av caps he had stole out av the father's shop.

"There was a deal av wranglin' an' disputin' about who was to be who on the other side.

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The biggest rush was for Pathrick Sarsfield; but when big Jacky McGra, the blacksmith's son, buttoned up his coat an' swore if anybody else wanted to be Pathrick Sarsfield he'd blacken his eye for him, they all turned their attention to who'd be King James. The wrestlin' an' wranglin' riz near as big as if it had been the rale thing; an' for a while it looked as if they were goin' to have a battle without waitin' for the enemy at all; till wee Sonny Morrison comin' up with a shield made out av a three-gallon pot-lid, an' his mother's best saucepan on his head for a helmet, he was made king on the spot, An' troth, as it turned out, like ould King James himself, he had no great luck av the crown.

"The leadin' men bein' once picked, the battle began with a deal av spirit on both sides. For a good while it was fought at long range wi' balls av clay out av the river banks. Wee Brown, the rector's son, that was doin' Walker av Derry, got a clay ball in the pit av his stomach that give him the colic from that till Christmas; an' Pathrick Sarsfield got one in the face that made a sore differs to his side; for the battle was all over before he got the gutthers scooped out av his eye. But barrin' this, an' a terrible spoilin' av good clothes, there was no great harm done.

"Then there riz a bit av a difference on the Orange side. Schomberg kept blazin' away caps on the horse-pistol so like the rale thing that every boy on his side was fair green wi' envy, an' King William, seein' he was bein' made as good as nobody by it, rides up till him an' insists that it was time he died accordin to the arrangement before they started.

"Schomberg was no way willin' to do this, but his caps bein' at an end he makes a blarge wi' the last of them that near blew one av the ears off the ass, an' lies down dead in the clay at the edge av the river. His mother warmed him for that later on.

"When the ass come to afther the dazin' av the shot he gives his ears one shake, lets a couple av skreighs out av him between a squeal an' a hee-haw, an' intil the river, teeth an' heels goin'; an' King William, afther near goin' out over the tail, makes the best av it, shouts to his men to come on, an' puts the ass at the opposite bank.

"For a minit or two it looked as if it was to be the ould story over again. King James an' his men stood up manful again the rest av the army, but they couldn't hould out again the ass. The squealin' an' bitin' an' kickin' av him was somethin' lamentable, an' if King William could ha' sat him at all the battle was as good as won.

"But a bad shot from his own side takin' the ass very threacherous in the rear, he clean forsook his colours altogether, rid himself av poor William wi' an exthra lift av his hind-end, an' away as if the divil was afther him; an' niver stopped, barrin' for thrippin' ivery now an' then on the bridle, till he reached home.

"This was great heartenin' for King James's men.

"Down the bank they come with a rush, throwin' clay balls an' blowin' peas an' leatherin' round them wi' sticks, King James himself at the head av them doin' desperate execution with a four-foot length av garden hose as he had stole out av Major Donaldson's garden; an' would ha' won the battle with his own hand only for the time he lost unwindin' it from round his neck every time he missed his blow.

"As it was him an' his men were well through the river an' the battle the same as ended, when, makin' a mighty spang up the bank, he puts his foot on Schomberg's face as he lay there dead.

"'Twas an unlucky step for James.

"Divil a word says Schomberg, good or bad, but lepps to his feet an' fetches the butt-end av the horse-pistol down on King James's helmet wi' both hands, an' the next minit the saucepan was sittin' on poor King James's shouldhers, an' him yellin' melia murdher from the inside; for the rim had had a difference wi' his nose on its way down, an' the nose had come badly out av it..

"DIVIL A WORD SAYS SCHOMBERG, GOOD OR BAD, BUT LEPPS TO HIS FEET AN' FETCHES THE BUTT-END AV THE HORSE-PISTOL DOWN ON KING JAMES'S HELMET WI' BOTH HANDS."

"The battle was over in the clappin' av your hands.

"Schomberg takes one look at what he'd done, dhrops the horse-pistol an' off home for his life, an' both armies gathers round King James, thryin' to quiet him; for the gowls av him inside the saucepan was like nothin' earthly, an' they were afeared av some av their mothers comin' down on them.

"None av them

thought very much av it at the first, for they deemed it wouldn't be much harder to get the saucepan off than it had been to get it on. But when they had worked at it for a quarther av an hour an' near wrung King James's neck, an' still nothin' comin' av it, they began to slip away quietly by ones an' twos, till at the last there was only about half-a-dozen or so left.

"WHEN THEY HAD WORKED AT IT FOR A QUARTHER AV AN HOUR AN' NEAR WRUNG KING JAMES'S NECK, AN' STILL NOTHIN' COMIN' AV IT, THEY BEGAN TO SLIP AWAY QUIETLY BY ONES AN' TWOS."

"By this time King Jamesbegin to see that he was av some importance, an' stopped cryin' an' commenced to put on airs, an' was content enough to let the saucepan stay where it was. But the others was too uneasy in their minds to hear av that, an' when Pathrick Sarsfield come up from the rear they were as glad to see him as ever the Irishmen was at the Boyne.

"'Here's big Jacky McGra,' sez wan. 'Ay, here's Jacky,' sez another; 'he'll have it off in no time.' An' Jacky, bein' a big lusty fellow wi' a fair conceit av himself an' some experience av handlin' tools, was much av the same opinion himself.

"'Stan' back an' gimme a chap at it,' sez he. 'If a horse-pistol put it on, sure it can take it off again.'

"So they stood back an' let him at it.

"Maybe it was the dirt in his eye, or maybe he was a bit nervous; but the first lick he took he missed the rim av the saucepan by about an inch, an' near put the rings av his backbone out av joint wi' the twist he give himself; an' the next blow takin' King James about the shouldher-blade an' startin' him on a worse gowl than ever, the whole party took to their heels an' away, thinkin' they had finished him, an' left him to make his way home the best he could.

"More by good luck than good guidin' poor wee Sonny gropes his way up ontil the road. The mother's house was only a step or two away then, an' he got the length av it without breakin' his neck.

"But och! the Boyne itself was nothin' to the row that riz when he did.

"At the first fright av seein' the saucepan walk in an' sit down cryin' by the fire the mother dhrops the pot she was liftin' an' makes for the room-door without a word, she was that frightened.

"But when she made out 'twas wee Sonny was inside the saucepan, an' afther tuggin' at it till she was tired couldn't get him out av it, between cryin' an' lamentin', an' scoldin' at them that had put the saucepan on him, an' shoutin' at himself because he didn't take it off, she riz the very divil's own row; an' happenin' to be passin' by on my way intil Ballygullion I steps in to see who was bein' killed.

"For a minit or two I couldn't for the life av me make out what was wrong; but when I did come at it nothin' but the disthress the poor crather av a mother was in would ha' kept me from laughin'.

"First she'd start to tell me a bit more av the story, an' thin in the middle av it break out roarin' an' cryin' that her wee son was ruined an' desthroyed; an' then all at once she'd get mad at the wee fellow for bringin' himself intil the scrape, an' would make at him wi' her hand up till she'd mind that his ears was well protected by the saucepan; an' wi' that she'd burst intil another tanthrum wi' the vexation that she couldn't get at him. All the time the saucepan hoppin' about with its hands up to save itself every time she took a run-race at it, an' liftin' a cup or a plate off the dhresser every other minit wi' the handle. The divil a such a circus ye ever seen!

"'Hould on, Mary, hould on!' sez I, at the last. 'Have ye thried all ye can to get it off him?'

"'Thried is it, Misther Murphy?' sez she, breakin' out in a fresh roar. 'If I pulled an ounce harder I'd a had the ears off the child.'

"'An', 'deed, small pity too if I did,' sez she, gettin' mad again an' takin' a race at him. 'I've a big mind to pull it off him, ears an' all, the wee——'

"'Wait now, Mary, wait a minit,' sez I, gettin' between her an' the wee chap. 'Put on your shawl an' come up wi' me to the docthor's till we see what can be done. For if the child's head swells in it you'll never get it off him till they trail him to the graveyard by the handle.'

"'You're right, Misther Murphy, you're right,' sez she, all in a splutther. 'Sure I might ha' thought av that before if my head hadn't been near turned. Come on, ye wee heart-scald ye, an' if I don't warm your lugs when the saucepan comes off them, my name's not Morrison! Gimme your hand.' An' she out wi' him an' up the road.

"When we got intil the surgery down comes ould Dr. Dennison, chewin' the last bite av his dinner he'd put in his mouth, an' lookin' mighty cross at bein' disturbed.

"'What's wrong now, Mrs. Morrison?' sez he, feelin' for his glasses. 'What's this?' sez he, as he puts them on an' sees the saucepan. 'How'd he get this on his head? How'd ye get your head in this, boy?' sez he, very sharp, bendin' down his ear to the child.

wi' a hand-saw an' then prise it out wi' a cold chisel? This is a job for a blacksmith,' sez he, feelin' round the boy's neck. 'Take him away out av this.

"'Fetch him up to the blacksmith's, Pat,' sez he to me. 'Ye aye like to have your finger in every pie.'

"'But, docthor,' sez the mother, 'could ye not do *somethin'?* Could ye not pour somethin' on the pot would melt it?'

"'I could,' sez he; 'only ye could put all would be left av the pot an' his head in a naggin bottle when I'd done. Away out av this, ye ould fool ye!' sez he, openin' the door an' pushin' the child out. 'Take him up to the blacksmith's an' he'll have the thing off his head in half an hour with a file. Here, come back,' sez he—he was a kindly man for all his short

"THE WEE FELLOW, TURNIN' ROUND SHARP TO THE MOTHER'S VOICE, FETCHES THE DOCTHOR A WELT ON THE BRIDGE AV THE NOSE."

"'Spake up an' tell the docthor,' sez the mother, bendin' down to the other ear—unlucky enough, as it happened; for the wee fellow, turnin' round sharp to the mother's voice, fetches the docthor a welt on the bridge av the nose wi' the handle av the saucepan that knocked his eyeglasses intil the fendher an' starred one eye like a shop-windy with a stone through it.

"'Away out av this, you an' your brat!' roars the docthor, dancin' round in a rage wi' the glasses in his hand. 'I'll charge ye wi' these, mind ye, I'll charge ye wi' these—I'll put them down in the bill! I'll——'

"'Och! charge me what ye like, docthor dear,' sez the poor woman, half-cryin', 'only take the pot off his head, for the love av God, or——'

"'Take the pot off his head!' sez the docthor, still in a rage. 'How the divil would I take the pot off his head—barrin' I take the head off him

temper—'wait till I make ye up a pot av ointment. The child'll be bruised.'

"'Never mind, Pat,' sez he, as I went to call the boy back. 'Let him dandher down the road. I'll not be more than a minit, if ye'll wait till I get my dinner over.'

"So the mother an' I sits down a bit, waitin' on the docthor, an' while we were there wee Sonny wandhers on down the road till he came to the wall between it an' the schoolhouse; an' just as he come fornent the schoolhouse itself the masther, Misther MacDermott, happened to be lookin' out av the windy.

"The masther, as everybody knowed, was no teetotaller, an' the Twelfth comin' in at the end av the holidays, he had wound up wi' a terrible burst wi' one or two Orangemen he met comin' home from the field—just to show, as he said, that there was one broad-minded man in this benighted counthry.

"I'll say this for the wee man, he was no way

bigoted about who he took a dhrink wi'. There's a deal av the same kind av broad-mindedness about Ballygullion.

"But, anyway, whether the masther's mind had been broader than usual, or whether Michael Casshidy's Twelfth av July whisky didn't lie kindly on a Catholic stomach, the wee man was in a mortial bad way this day, an' wi' the thrimmle in his hand had put as many ins an' outs in the map av Ireland he'd been dhrawin' on the blackboard as would ha' bothered the best pilot on the coast. So thinkin' to steady his nerves a bit, he went to the schoolroom windy for a mouthful av fresh air.

"The first thing his eyes fell on was the saucepan; 'twas all he could see for the wall.

"'Who's been puttin' rubbish on the school wall?' sez he, very cross. 'Here, Mickey McQuillan, run out an' take that thing off.'

"'What thing, sir?' sez Mickey, comin' forward.

"Just at that minit the saucepan begins to move. The masther takes a hard look at it, an' turns very pale.

"'Mickey,' sez the masther, very quiet, 'do ye see a saucepan out there?"

"'Where, sir?' sez Mickey, all in a flusther, wi' the eyes av the whole school on him.

"'Out there on the wall,' sez the masther, very short. 'Don't ye see it, ye gomeril?'

"'Yes, sir, oh, yes, sir,' sez Mickey, in a hurry, though divil a thing he saw, good, bad, or betther. An' small blame to him; for the sash av the windy was a good two inches higher than his head, though the masther was too flusthered to notice that.

"The saucepan stopped an' turned round wi' Sonny Morrison turnin' his head to listen for the mother; an' then it begin to move on again, very slow.

"'Do ye see it movin, Mickey?' sez the masther, in a kind av an off-hand way, as if it was nothin' much to him. 'Don't say it's movin'!' sez he, breakin' out very fierce.

"'No, sir,' sez Mickey, edgin' away from the cane in the wee man's hand; 'it's not movin' at all, sir.'

"The masther looks hard at the saucepan again, an' there, sure enough, it was walkin' along the wall.

"'Mickey,' sez he, takin' a sthrong grip av himself, an' spakin' very slow an' quiet, 'are ye *sure* it's not movin'—positive?'

"'Yes, sir,' sez Mickey, very anxious to please him, 'positive, sir.' An' wi' that the saucepan passes out av sight, with a desperate waggle on the handle through wee Sonny thrippin' on a stone.

"'Holy Biddy,' sez the masther to himself, turnin' very white, an' thrimmlin' all over; 'this is terrible, this is terrible altogether. 'Twas that last glass in Michael's, or maybe the half-pint I took home.

"'I deserve it,' sez he, very bitther, 'I deserve it. This is what comes av dhrinkin' holiday whisky—me that knows what good liquor is, too.

"'But what's to be done at all?' sez he, dhroppin' down on a seat wi' his head in his hands. 'There's nothin' for it but the docthor,' sez he, startin' up again.

"'Boys,' sez he, turnin' round to them all starin' at him, 'the school is dismissed. I'm not feelin' just at meself. Never mind me,' sez he, as one or two av them made to go over till him. 'I'll just sit down a minit or two an' then go home. Gather up your books an' slates quietly—*quietly!*' he roars, as young Rafferty dhrops a slate wi' a clatther that made the wee man jump six inches sthraight up from the chair. 'An' if there's any—any rubbish on the school wall as you're goin' past, dhrive it—I mean take it away.'

"JUST AT THAT MINIT THE SAUCEPAN BEGINS TO MOVE. 'MICKEY,' SEZ THE MASTHER VERY QUIET, 'DO YE SEE A SAUCEPAN OUT THERE?'"

"So the childher gathers up their bits av things an' slips out very quiet, leavin' him sittin' there lookin' very hard at the blackboard an' ready to jump out av the windy if it as much as budged.

"In the meantime Mrs. Morrison an' me had been sittin' at the docthor's, she still lookin' down the road an' gettin' fidgetier ivery minit as she watched the wee chap stumblin' along, till at last, when he thripped over the stone at the schoolhouse, she could thole no longer, but down the road afther him, tellin' me to wait for the ointment.

"The docthor kept me a brave while waitin', what wi' laughin' at the idea av the wee chap in the saucepan, an' then pickin' up his glasses

an' gettin' angry when he looked at the wreck av them; an' at last when I did get out who should I meet but the wee masther comin' up the road, desperate white an' shook-lookin'.

"'What's wrong wi' ye, masther?' sez I; for troth 'twas sthrange to see the same wee man without a bit av a twinkle in his eye. 'Has anythin' happened, that you're lookin' so glum?'

"'Pat,' sez he, lookin' at me very hard, 'ye take a dhrop av dhrink like meself—maybe less, maybe less,' as he seen me goin' to say somethin', 'but still a brave dhrop. Tell me, did ye ever see anythin'—anythin' movin' about?' sez he, moistenin' his lips.

"'Not that I mind,' sez I. 'I niver thried just that hard. But I've heard av people that did, customers av Michael's mostly, about a holiday or a fair day.'

"'Did ye ever see a saucepan walkin' along a wall?' sez he, bendin' forward an' spakin' undher his breath.

"I spotted the whole thing in a flash; but still keepin' my face straight, 'Never,' sez I. 'I never even heard av such a thing.'

"'Well, I saw one walk along the schoolhouse wall a wee while ago,' sez the masther, lookin' back at the wall, an' then turnin' his head away very quick. 'Right along the wall it walked, from one end av it to the other, an' when it come to the far end it stopped an' wagged its tail at me. Pat,' sez he, all pale an' shakin', 'I've got them—I've got them bad.'

"'Tut,' sez I, 'ye'll be all right in a day or two. It might ha' been far more serious. A saucepan's not as bad as a snake,' sez I, to cheer him up; for I seen he was badly shook, an' I didn't want the thing to go too far.

"'It's worse,' sez he, 'far worse. I could work wi' a snake. Sure St. Pathrick banished them long ago,' sez he, wi' the wee'st bit av a twinkle in his eye; 'an' if I seen one I'd know 'twas only imagination. But when the kitchen utensils comes out an' prances up an' down the open sthreet in broad daylight it's time somethin' was done.

"'An' all, mind ye, on less whisky, spread over a whole day an' a deal av the night, than I've had many a time between my dinner an' my tea.

"'I'm a done man, Pat,' sez he, lookin' at me very melancholy. 'I'm goin' down the hill fast. The last of the MacDermotts is goin' to end his days little betther than a teetotaller.'

"'Ye should go up an' see the docthor,' sez I.

"'It's just where I'm goin' this very minit,' sez he. 'Tell me, though, Pat,' sez he, cockin' his eye at me very anxious—'he wouldn't want me to take the pledge, d'ye think? For troth, if he did, I'd rather thole. The remedy would be worse than the disease.'

"'He'd never think av it,' sez I. 'Sure he's been livin' in Ballygullion too long.'

"'Come on back wi' me, then, Pat,' sez he, 'an' we'll hear what he says.'

"But when the docthor heard the case, wi' all the winkin' I did—an' I near give meself paralysis av the right side av my face—he could hardly contain himself. He'd never ha' kept in if he hadn't seen the chance av a lifetime to straighten the masther up.

"'There's no use disguisin' it, Misther MacDermott,' sez he, lookin' very solemn; 'this is a very serious business!'

"'Divil a doubt av it,' sez the masther. 'The cold thrimmles is runnin' down my backbone this minit. Ye should tell that servant av yours to shut the kitchen door when she comes to open for anybody at the front. There was a wicked-looking old saucepan sittin' on a shelf that near turned me back again, an' me in the very hall.'

"I could see by this the masther was comin' round a bit.

"'Don't make a joke av it, Misther MacDermott,' sez the docthor. 'You're on the verge av a nervous breakdown, an' maybe av insanity,' sez he, very slow an' weighty. 'There's only one thing can save ye.'

"'What's that, docthor?' sez the masther. But I could see by his face he knowed right well.

"'You'll have to abstain from all intoxicatin' liquors for some time,' sez the docthor; 'nothin' else is av any good.'

"'How much do I owe ye, docthor?' sez the wee man, gettin' up. 'I'd rather face the saucepans. Maybe I'll get used to them in time.'

"'Ye owe me nothin',' sez the docthor. 'I'll take no money from a dyin' man. It's my duty to tell ye that it's very unlikely, if ye persist in your present way av livin', that ye'll be alive this day month. Good-bye, Misther MacDermott,' sez he, houldin' out his hand.

"The cold sweat broke on the wee man. First he looked at me an' then at the docthor; but we were both as solemn as judges, though I'd ha' given half a crown for a good laugh.

"'How long would do, docthor?' sez he, in desperation. 'I'll face it for a while. 'Twould be a pity for me to go off before the school examinations, an' lose my result fees.'

"'Three months,' sez the docthor, 'at the very least.'

"'Ye might as well say years, docthor,' sez the wee man. 'It couldn't be done at all. Sure I might as well die av the horrors as the drouth. When are the Ballygullion races, Pat?' sez he to me.

"'This day four weeks, masther,' sez I.

"'Very well, docthor,' sez he; 'I'll take the pledge for four weeks short av a day, an' divil an hour longer, should the kitchen-range come out an' dance a polka in front av me!'

"'It's no manner av use,' sez the docthor. 'Ye wouldn't ha' lost the taste for dhrink be that time.'

"'An' who tould ye I wanted to lose the taste for it,' sez the masther, very sharp—'a man wi' the gift av dhrinkin' whisky that I have? What would become av Michael Casshidy if I lost the taste for dhrink? He'd be in the poorhouse in a twelvemonth. Sure he whitewashed the whole premises an' repainted the sign-board out av my last quarther's salary. Ye have no considheration for the public institutions av the town at all, docthor. Four weeks—short av a day, as I said—or nothin'.'

"There was no use aimin' too high an' missin' altogether, so afther arguin' a bit more the docthor give in an' bound the masther over for the time he said, wi' me for a witness; an' the wee man an' I goes back down the road.

"There wasn't a word spoke. The masther walked wi' his head down, an' the tall hat on the back av his head, as miserable-lookin' as if the whole av his friends was dead an' buried; an' as for me I.aye kept wondherin' what he'd do or say when he found out how he'd been thricked. I hadn't long to wait.

"Just as we come to the schoolhouse, who should we meet but Long Tammas McGorrian, in a great hurry.

"'Masther,' sez he, all out av breath, 'I wish ye'd step up to the blacksmith's an' see what ye could do wi' wee Sonny Morrison.'

"'Now for it!' sez I.

"'He's got his head fixed in a saucepan,' goes on Tammas.

"'What's that ye say, Tammas?' sez the masther, all thrimmlin'. 'What's that about a saucepan?'

"'The wee fellow's got his head fixed in a saucepan, God knows how,' sez Tammas, 'an' has been walkin' about all mornin' an' can't get it off. The blacksmith has it by the handle in a vise, an' has creeshed the child's head well, and wants him to pull hard enough to get out; but he won't, for all we can do. Maybe you could persuade him. He'd be afeared av you.'

"But the masther said nothin' for a minit or two, but leaned up again the wall.

"'Four weeks,' sez he till himself, very low an' bitther—'four weeks, wantin' a day. Oh, holy Biddy, an' me passin' Michael Casshidy's twice every day at the very least! Wait a minit, Tammas,' sez he, leppin' up, 'wait till I get my cane, an' if I don't have him out av it, should he leave the whole side av his head behind him, he'll not sit down aisy from this to the Ballygullion races anyway!' And he intil the schoolroom like a ragin' lunatic.

"But he fumbled a while at the gate, wi' the splutther he was in, an' I just had time to explain matthers to Tammas.

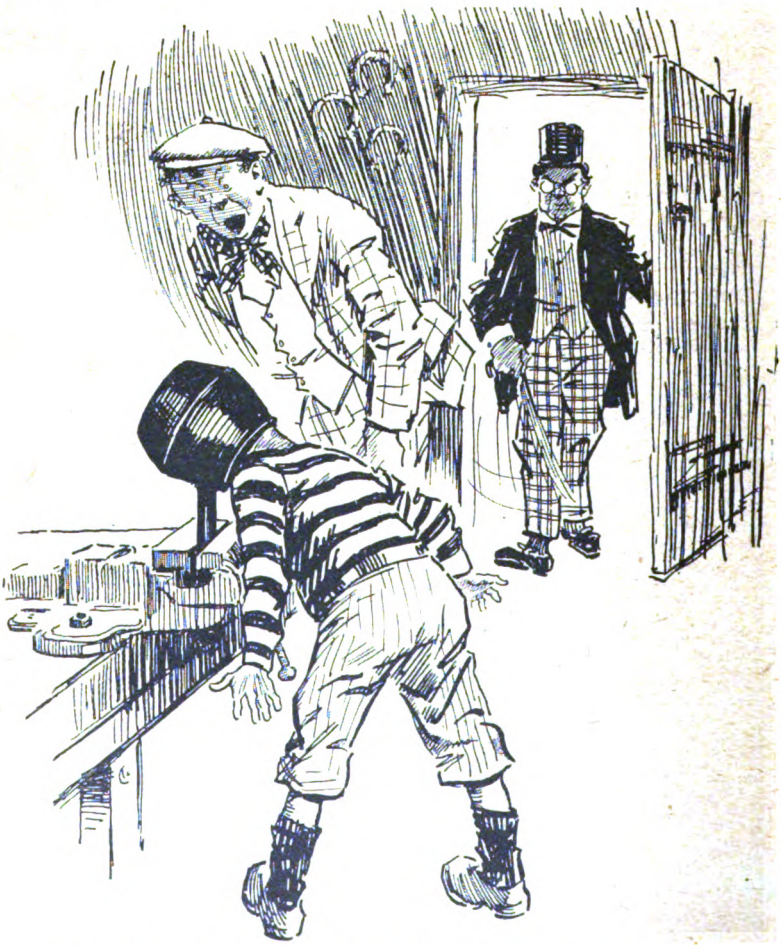
"'Run, Tammas, run now!' sez I; 'you're longer in the legs than I am; for if the wee fellow isn't out before the masther comes, the blacksmith himself won't be able to save him. Run, man!'

"Away goes Tammas like a hare, an' me afther him all I was fit, to see the fun. But before I reached the forge the masther was near on top av me.

"I could hear the shouts av Tammas an' the rest av them inside. 'Pull, sonny, pull; he's comin'!'

"'Pull, ye boy ye!' shouts Tammas; 'here he's at the door. By the mortial, he's got ye!'

"But that minit wee Sonny gives a last wrestle an' a yell, an' out av the saucepan an' through the back door just as the masther in at the front one wi' the cane swishin' round him like a flail. One or two av us got in front av the masther; but we might ha' saved ourselves the trouble. If the real King James only run as hard from the Boyne as Sonny Morrison did from the blacksmith's shop, it's small wondher he was the first av his men to get to Dublin."



"'PULL, YE BOY YE!' SHOUTS TAMMAS; 'HERE HE'S AT THE DOOR. BY THE MORTIAL, HE'S GOT YE!'"

MISS PETT'S GRAND CHANCE.

By KEBLE HOWARD.

Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

I.

MISS REBECCA PETT looked very dejected as she sat up in bed and sipped her morning tea. This was not so much because her thin locks were thickly sprinkled with grey, or the lines about her eyes very deep in the morning sunlight. Miss Pett had long since resigned herself to spinsterhood and the rapid passage of years.

No. Her dejection on this particular morning had been caused by the lady who delivered the letters. Those letters now lay open on the counterpane, and Miss Pett's eyes filled with tears as she glanced at them over the edge of her tea-cup. For, despite her age, despite her solitary state of life, Miss Pett did so badly want to take her share in the great struggle for Liberty and Honour!

"Dear Madam," said the first letter, "the Committee have considered your application very carefully, and, whilst fully conscious of the patriotic feelings which inspired it, regret that they cannot see their way to make use of your services at the present time. Should any opportunity arise . . ."

"Dear Madam," said the second letter, "I am instructed by the Hon. Sec. to acknowledge your letter of the fourteenth ult., and to inform you that, owing to the arduous nature of the work, only ladies thoroughly accustomed to outdoor work can be accepted by this society."

"THE EXCITEMENT OF MISS PETT AS SHE READ THIS ADVERTISEMENT WAS AMAZING TO BEHOLD!"

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"Dear Madam," said the third letter, "in reply to your application for employment by this organization, will you kindly state whether you can (*a*) swim, (*b*) harness a horse, (*c*) sail a boat, (*d*) shoot with a rifle, and (*e*) run a mile without stopping? Awaiting the favour of your reply . . ."

"Three years of war," said Miss Pett, to herself, "and nothing done yet! Not a blow struck for the Great Cause! Useless to our gallant Navy, our noble Army, our heroic flying men! Unwanted! The old, old story!"

But she was a brave little woman, so she dashed the tears away and took up the morning paper. It was Miss Pett's custom to begin the paper at the Agony column, and she was true to habit this morning. Instantly her eyes fell upon the following:—

IN THE INTERESTS OF JUSTICE, will any LADY or GENTLEMAN who witnessed the ARREST of a GENTLEMAN at the Corner of BOND STREET at 6.45 FRIDAY EVENING kindly COMMUNICATE with H., Box 1,743, Tuberdore's, Regent Street, W.1?

The excitement of Miss Pett as she read this advertisement was amazing to behold! Her eyes bulged! She scrabbled at the bedclothes! She gasped for breath!

Finally, she positively leapt from her bed and raced through her toilet!

How clearly the whole scene passed before her mind's eye! The handsome young officer in khaki! The brutal policemen! The jeering crowd! The young fellow's passionate appeals for fair play!

"What a providence!" muttered Miss Pett as she dressed. "I might have missed it altogether! What a grand chance at last! Communicate? I should think I will communicate! Oh, Rebecca Pett, my dear, to think of you maundering and slobbering over those stilted letters from idiotic secretaries while all the time *this* was waiting for you! Bother the switch!"

No sooner dressed than Miss Pett, without waiting for breakfast, flew for the omnibus that would bear her to Regent Street. How gay were the streets this morning! How friendly were all the people! What a nice conductress! Oh, Miss Pett was very, very happy!

The youth at Tuberdore's regarded her across the counter with a cold and discouraging eye.

"Yes, ma'am?"

"Oh!" said Miss Pett, "I've come about the advertisement in the Agony column of the *Times* this morning. Here it is. Who is 'H.,' please, and where can I find him?"

"You must write in," replied the cold youth.

"But that will take such a long time, and this matter is very urgent! If you could give me the name and address in confidence, I promise you faithfully, my dear boy, that I——!"

"You must write in," repeated the lad, rather nettled at being called a dear boy. "We don't never give no names and addresses. Good morning."

So there was nothing for it but to return home and write a letter to "H.," and await the answer. Miss Pett had not the least idea how she should survive until the answer arrived, but she spent the interval in preparing her statement and arming herself at every point against the cross-examination of the magistrate or prosecuting counsel.

On the evening of the second day the answer arrived. Miss Pett read it with fearful avidity.

"Dear Madam," said the obviously feminine writer, "in answer to your kind offer of assistance, would you be so good as to call at this address to-morrow morning at twelve o'clock? Trusting that this will be convenient, I remain, yours sincerely, (Miss) G. FAIRLIGHT."

"That's curious!" commented Miss Pett, holding the letter to the light and studying the watermark. "A woman! A girl, to judge from the handwriting! Wheels within wheels! The plot thickens! Never mind, Rebecca, my dear! It's all for the Army! It's real war-work! Keep your pecker up and never say die!"

Miss Pett slept but lightly that night, and was outside the house named an hour before noon. She longed to ring the bell at once, but that would not do, so she walked round and round the block. The round trip occupied only five minutes, so that Miss Pett was getting pretty well known to the local police and residents when the moment came to ring the bell and interview G. Fairlight.

She was shown into a nice drawing-room. Her attention was at once attracted by the photograph of a young officer on the grand piano. Ah, the poor lad! The eyes were calm in the photograph, yet how they could appeal! The expression was serene, yet what anguish must he now be suffering as he languished in a filthy jail!

"I will save you," said Miss Pett to the photograph, "or perish myself in the attempt!"

"HER ATTENTION WAS AT ONCE ATTRACTED BY THE PHOTOGRAPH OF A YOUNG OFFICER ON THE GRAND PIANO."

Just then the door opened, and a young lady entered. She was tall and fair and dignified, and had blue eyes and a perfect figure.

"What a splendid couple they must make together!" thought Miss Pett. "All right, my darling! Your beloved shall be restored to your arms! I, Rebecca Pett, will do it! And, having done that, I can die content!"

"Good morning," said the young lady. "Miss Pett?"

"The same," said Miss Pett, with a low bow.

"I am Miss Fairlight. You were good enough to answer my advertisement. Won't you sit down?"

"I thank you," replied Miss Pett, and sat.

"I take it," began Miss Fairlight, "that you were present at the corner of Bond Street at the time named on the evening named, and that you witnessed the whole episode?"

"That is so," said Miss Pett, just as she had decided to reply to the brutal magistrate and the sarcastic prosecuting counsel.

"Would you recognize the gentleman again?"

"Most certainly." And Miss Pett indicated the portrait of the young officer on the piano.

"Yes," agreed Miss Fairlight, with a slight blush, "that is the gentleman. I ought to tell you, perhaps, that we are engaged to be married."

Miss Pett sighed approval of this excellent arrangement.

"Naturally, therefore," continued Miss Fairlight, "I am very much concerned to get an unbiased account of this unfortunate episode. Would you mind answering a few candid—and quite confidential—questions?"

"Not in the least." And Miss Pett, having rehearsed this scene before her mirror, rose.

"Pray sit down," Miss Fairlight begged. "Now, in the first place, was the gentleman sober?"

"Perfectly!" Miss Pett was very earnest on this point.

"You are quite convinced of that?"

"Absolutely!"

"Thank you. What was the general attitude of the police?"

"Brutal in the extreme!"

"Really? You mean that they lost their tempers?"

"Worse than that! They gave way to unbridled passion! The way they pulled and tugged at him! Their faces! If you suggested now, Miss Fairlight, that the *police* were drunk——!"

"Oh, I scarcely think that possible. And now about the crowd; which side did they take?"

"Oh, that of the officer! They were most indignant with the police—most indignant!"

"You were too late, I suppose, to learn the cause of the arrest?"

"Yes, unhappily, but I know it was all an error, and then the police got obstinate and brutal."

"What makes you think it was all an error?"

"From the way the gentleman behaved. If ever I saw injured innocence on a countenance, I saw it that evening!"

"Well, Miss—er—Pett, I'm very much obliged to you for taking so much trouble. I have your address, and if I should drop you a line——?"

"Oh, with the utmost pleasure! At any time! Pray command me! It's so little one can do for our gallant defenders! Please, please don't hesitate a single instant!"

II.

At three o'clock that afternoon the original of the photograph on the piano ran up the steps of Miss Fairlight's home, rang the bell, and was admitted. Ten minutes later, Miss Fairlight joined him in the drawing-room. The young officer's face was radiant. The young woman's face was sad and stern.

"Halloa, old thing!" cried the officer, advancing with outstretched arms.

Miss Fairlight stepped back, holding up a forbidding hand.

The young man looked vastly astonished. "What's the matter?" he demanded. "Anything wrong?"

"Yes, Arnold. I am sorry to say that something is very wrong."

"Great Scot! Old man ill?"

"My father is perfectly well, thank you. But I regret to say that I have made a shocking discovery."

"Discovery? What sort of a discovery?" His mouth, his ears, and his eyes were all wide open.

"About you."

"A discovery about me? Are you off your dot, old girl?"

"Please don't be vulgar. I have discovered that you told me a deliberate lie last Friday evening."

"Friday evening? Friday evening? I don't remember telling any particular whacker that night. What was it?"

"You arrived here in a strangely rumpled condition. You were excited and flustered. I asked you the reason. You said you'd had a severe struggle to get off the bus on account of the crowds of women trying to get on."

"Quite true. One simply had to fight."

"So I gather. But not with women trying to board a bus. With the police."

Arnold stared like one mentally stunned. Then he began to laugh.

"This is no laughing matter," Gracia assured him. "You will find that out in a minute. Of all the things I loathe in a man, deceit is the most loathsome."

"Well, keep your wool on, old thing!"

"I've already asked you not to talk in that strain. It may be all very well for police-stations."

"I wish you'd get to the point, Gracia."

"I will. Why didn't you tell me on Friday evening that you'd been mixed up in a street row?"

"Because I wasn't. Nothing of the sort. I simply got off the bus, and ran all the way here because I was a bit late."

"I WON'T SAY GOOD-BYE. I'M GOING RIGHT ALONG NOW TO INTERVIEW THIS MISS PETT."

"And I can prove," Gracia announced, with scorn flashing from her beautiful eyes—or so she hoped—"that you were arrested by the police and dragged off to a police-station!"

"This is a rotten sort of joke, Gracia. You're overdoing it. Keeping it up too long."

"Kindly read this."

She handed him Miss Pett's letter. Arnold read it through three times. Then, still retaining it, he said, "What has this to do with me?"

"It has everything to do with you. I disbelieved your story on Friday evening, and, knowing your wild habits, I inserted the advertisement referred to in that letter. This lady called here this morning. Without any hint whatever from me, she identified you by that photograph as the man she had seen struggling with the police."

"Oh, she did, did she? Then she's a silly, interfering old idiot! All officers look alike to women of her stamp. Mischievous cat!"

"You misunderstand her motives completely. She came to see me because she thought I wanted evidence in your favour. She said you were quite sober and behaved very well."

"Thanks!"

"Of course, I didn't explain to her my real reason for inserting the advertisement."

"May I ask what the real reason was?"

"I wanted to find out if you were truthful or not. It is a great blow to me, Arnold, to have proved to myself that you are untruthful. It is the one thing in a man I will not tolerate. Need I say any more?"

"Good heavens, Gracia! You don't mean to say you're going to break off our engagement because of this lying old harridan?"

"Strong language will not help matters. I am very sorry. Good-bye."

"I won't say good-bye. I'm going right along now to interview this Miss Pett, and if she doesn't take it all back I'll wring her wretched old neck! Mark my words!"

He was out of the house and down the steps like lightning.

"Arnold!" called the girl, terrified. "Arnold! Arnold!"

But the infuriated soldier was on the way to Miss Pett's lodgings.

Miss Pett was again sipping tea—afternoon tea this time—but how different her demeanour! Utterly vanished was all that dejection, all that look of melancholy, all that terrible unwanted feeling! At last she was of use in the world! At last she was to play a part, and no small part, in the Great War! Ten years younger she looked already.

A tap on the door of the sitting-room.

"Come in!" called Miss Pett, in a voice that vibrated with new life.

The small servant entered with a card. The small servant was stricken with unwonted awe.

"If you please, miss," she whispered, "it's a horficer!"

"Silence!" commanded Miss Pett. "I can read the card for myself!"

Pince-nez found and adjusted, Miss Pett read: "Mr. Arnold Camber."

"I thought you said an officer?" queried Miss Pett.

"Yes, miss, so 'e is, and awful tall!"

Ah! Doubtless a brother-officer with the latest news from the cells! Good! Let the court-martial commence! The principal witness was ready!

"Show him in," said Miss Pett, with a majestic wave of the hand. Then she quickly removed the pince-nez and hid them under the tea-cosy.

The small servant showed in the visitor, closed the door, and flung herself to her knees in the passage. Through the keyhole she could just see the tail of Arnold's service-jacket.

"Are you Miss Pett?" began Arnold.

"I am. Pray be seated. Will you take tea?"

"Tea be——! At least, no thank you. My name is Camber—Arnold Camber."

"So I understand."

"You wrote this letter, I believe, to Miss Fairlight?"

"Quite correct."

"May I ask why you wrote it?"

"I felt it to be my duty."

"Your duty?"

"Yes—my duty as a patriot! My duty as a worshipper of our gallant forces! My duty as a humble subject of our gracious King!"

"Hang on a bit! You called on Miss Fairlight this morning, I believe?"

"That is indeed so."

"And she showed you a certain photograph?"

"She did—the photograph of yourself. May I inquire whether you are out on bail?"

Arnold looked very sharply at the spinster. She was quite serious.

"No, Miss Pett. I am not out on bail, for the excellent reason that I was never in."

"Never in? Oh, but surely——?"

"No, Miss Pett. You've backed the wrong horse! Barked up the wrong tree! Get me?"

"But I certainly understood from Miss Fairlight that you had been—er—that you were——!"

"Well, I haven't and I wasn't. You've made a pretty considerable bloomer, Miss Pett. Whoever the poor bloke may be that you saw lugged off to quod, it was not your humble. And worse is to come. Miss Fairlight and I were engaged to be married. Thanks to you, Miss Pett, the engagement is now broken off, and the only thing left for me to do is to get across to France and be shot as quickly as possible!"

Miss Pett turned a ghastly green. Gone was all the jauntiness! Back rushed all the wrinkles and dejection! She was on the point of becoming a murderess!

"I don't understand," faltered the poor lady. "If you were never in—in difficulty, why did Miss Fairlight put that advertisement in the paper?"

"As a test. She got it into her head that I'd had a scrap with the police. You know how obstinate girls can be about such things. So she advertised for a witness. By a curious coincidence—and not so curious when you remember how many soldiers of all sorts there are in London at the present moment—you had seen an actual scrap. That's all right. But it was very naughty of you, old thing, to identify me as the prisoner! You've been and gone and done me in! That's what you've done!"

Miss Pett clasped her hands in agony.

"No, no! Don't, don't say that! I should never forgive myself! Take me at once to Miss Fairlight, and I'll tell her that I was mistaken! Let us not lose a moment!"

The soldier shook his head. "No good, old sport! She wouldn't believe you! We must think of a better way out than that."

Silence in the parlour. The small servant simply quivered with excitement.

"I have it!" suddenly cried Miss Pett. "You must have an accident!"

"A what?" asked the soldier, staring.

"An accident! A street-accident! You have been knocked down by a taxi-cab! You are not killed, but your head is injured! Quick! Let me bind it up in this!" She produced, as though by magic, a surgical bandage. Miss Pett was more thoroughly equipped for all the exigencies of war than any woman in London.

"Wait!" beseeched the soldier. "You're too rapid for me! What good will it do if I am bound up?"

"Good gracious! Can't you see, my dear sir? I bind up your poor head! You lie on that sofa! I sprinkle the room with iodoform! The whole house reeks of it! Then I dash off for Miss Fairlight! I work upon her sympathies! She sees you lying prone! Her heart melts! I leave you together! When I return, all is well! Quick! Quick!"

"The idea is fairly sound," admitted Arnold, "but it needs support. You get to work with the iodoform while I go out and telephone to a pal of mine. Where's the nearest call-office?"

III.

"HUSH!" whispered Miss Pett, ushering Gracia into the house. "He may be sleeping!"

She opened the door of her sitting-room. There lay Arnold on the sofa, his head a mass of bandages. The smell of the disinfectant was so strong that Gracia had to cough.

The patient, with a weary sigh, opened his eyes. They rested for a moment on Gracia. With a faint smile of recognition he stretched out a very brown and firm hand.

"You, darling?" he murmured.

Gracia drew a chair to the edge of the couch. Miss Pett, with a very full heart, crept from the room.

"What did the doctor say?" asked Gracia.

"Eh?" replied the patient, rather startled.

"What did the doctor say?"

"Oh! Yes, yes! Quite so! He said the brain was uninjured."

"That's lucky."

"Yes, isn't it?"

"Anything else?"

"Oh, yes. I mustn't get excited. And I must be kept cheerful. Humoured, and all that."

"I see. How long will you have to remain on Miss Pett's sofa?"

"Oh, not long; about twenty minutes or so."

"I gathered from Miss Pett that you were nearly killed."

"I might have been. It was a near thing."

"What were you doing to get knocked down by a cab?"

"Thinking of you."

"Where did it happen?"

"Two or three streets away. I managed to stagger along here."

"That's funny. Miss Pett said it happened just outside the window. She said she saw the cab knock you down."

"That's her vivid imagination. She can imagine anything. Most peculiar little woman."

'THIS IS A PUT-UP JOB BETWEEN YOU AND MISS PETT."

"She's a very poor conspirator."

"Conspirator? What in the world are you talking about, old thing?"

"There's been no accident, and you know it. This is a put-up job between you and Miss Pett. You worked on her feelings, and then got her to drag me round here under false pretences."

Gracia rose. She was very angry.

"Don't go!" cried the patient, leaping from the couch. "I had to get hold of you somehow. This beastly muddle must be cleared up."

"I see no way of clearing it up. I told you only this afternoon that the one thing I cannot tolerate in a man is deceit. In the face of that, you tie up your head and pretend to have had a street-accident! Think what my life would be, married to a confirmed fraud!"

She moved towards the door. Arnold dashed to intercept her.

"One moment, Gracia! If I can absolutely prove to you that I was not arrested last Friday night will you give me another chance?"

"It's impossible to prove that in the face of Miss Pett's assertion."

"She was mistaken. She admits it!"

"I can't believe a word either of you say!"

"Well, then—— Ah!"

A taxi had pulled up at the house. A tall man got out in the uniform of a police-inspector. The small servant showed him straight into the sitting-room.

"This is fine of you, Pennington!" said Arnold. "Gracia, dear, may I introduce Inspector Pennington, of Grape Street? Now, Pennington, old chap, I want you to answer one or two very simple questions, if you will."

"Certainly, Mr. Camber," replied the Inspector. "I've had the pleasure of working with a good many military gentlemen, miss, but never found one I got on with better than Mr. Camber."

"Thanks," said Arnold. "Now, Penning-

ton, if a man was arrested in Bond Street, day or night, to which station would he be taken?"

"To our station—Grape Street."

"Good! Now, were you on duty at the station last Friday evening?"

"Last Friday? Yes. I was on from five o'clock onwards."

"Good! Now, don't be amazed at my last question. Was I brought into the station last Friday evening under arrest?"

The door burst open. The small servant, unable longer to repress her excitement, dashed into the room.

"Not on'y that!" she shouted. "Miss Pett *never left the 'ouse at all last Friday evenin'!*"

The Inspector had gone. The small servant was banished to the scullery. Miss Rebecca Pett, her face buried in her handkerchief, moaned and wept.

"'OH!' BREATHED MISS PETT, SMILING ECSTATICALLY THROUGH HER TEARS. 'HOW BEAUTIFUL!'"

The Inspector laughed. "Good gracious me, no!"

"Thanks, old man. Now, Gracia, will you take it all back?"

"Unfortunately," pronounced Gracia, "Mr. Pennington is a friend of yours, and I understand that men always hang together in these affairs."

"That's easily answered, miss," observed the Inspector. "Not only was Mr. Camber not brought in, but no soldier of any sort, officer or private, was brought to the station last Friday evening."

"I did it for the best!" she wailed. "I did so want to help!"

"Miss Pett," said Arnold, "just stop crying for a moment and look up."

Miss Pett obeyed. She saw the soldier take Gracia in his arms. She saw them look into each other's eyes. She saw their lips meet in a long kiss.

"*Oh!*" breathed Miss Pett, smiling ecstatically through her tears. "How *beautiful!*"

"It's an encore!" said the soldier. And he repeated the action.

Life on a Battleship.

By E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT.

Illustrated by E. Prater.

This and the following article give, we think, the best description yet written of life on a battleship in war-time. The writer went down with the "Majestic" when she was torpedoed in the Dardanelles, and his account of that experience is a masterpiece of thrilling narrative.

I.—READY FOR ACTION.

THE Dardanelles expedition has been a bitter disappointment to everyone concerned in it, except perhaps to the younger officers of the British Navy. To them it was a wonderful feast of new experiences and excitements, which they are likely to cherish to the end of their lives. To myself, previously unacquainted with the Navy and a life at sea, it was both a great experience and a great privilege to take part in the operations against the Straits. Although the expedition failed, we may say with Francis I. at Pavia, that "*Tout est perdu fors l'honneur.*" Certainly Anglo-Saxon prestige as a fighting race has risen rather than fallen, in spite of failure, on account of the splendid heroism shown by all our officers and men.

At the commencement of the war, we possessed an immense number of old battleships, which were regarded as a second and third line of defence. Our immense fleet of Dreadnoughts was more than sufficient to bottle up the German Navy in the Kiel Canal. The officers and crews of the older battleships and cruisers felt it would be their lot to cruise about the Channel with small chance of fighting, but constantly exposed to submarine attack. Of course, their opportunity might come if we lost a number of Dreadnoughts, either through submarines or mines, which might encourage the enemy's fleet to come out and give battle. In such an event, at the end of an engagement, our pre-Dreadnought fleet might have been able to play a decisive *rôle*, but the contingency was too remote to keep alive the hopes of many. For the first six months of the war, the officers and men of the old battleships had a dull and disappointing time. Confined for the most part to the Channel ports, they had little to do, but nevertheless had always to hold themselves in readiness to meet any sudden emergency that might arise. Therefore the excitement can well be imagined when orders were received for them to sail for an unknown destination. The joy of expectancy was turned into practical realism when it became known that the Dardanelles was their objective. A heterogeneous squadron was collected in the Eastern Mediterranean in January, 1915. The ships varied in size and in age from the mighty *Queen Elizabeth*, our latest and greatest Dreadnought, to battleships that had first maintained the supremacy of the seas a quarter of a century before. The crews were also a very mixed crowd. The greater number of our active service ratings were required to man the Grand Fleet in the North Sea, and the older ships were completed with reserve crews, many of the men being between forty and fifty years of age, or else young boys who had hardly completed their period of instruction on the training ships. Of the officers, a great number were also drawn from the reserve and from the mercantile marine, and many of the midshipmen had been released from the toils of Osborne and Dartmouth after only one or two terms. Thus, in a trice, the officers and crews of these old ships, who for months past had been bemoaning their fate and casting envious glances towards the North Sea and their comrades in the Grand Fleet, who they felt would reap all the glory and enjoy all the fighting, were transported to the seventh heaven of elation when they suddenly found themselves face to face with a formidable enemy.

To the layman, a visit to a battleship, even in times of peace, is of absorbing interest. The life is entirely different to anything the civilian has previously known. He lives in a new and strange world and breathes a different atmosphere. He seems to have left the constitutional government under whose benevolent sway he has dwelt so long and so leniently, and to have entered an old feudal castle surrounded by battlements and engines of destruction, there to dwell under an autocrat who exercises supreme and unappealable authority over the eight hundred odd retainers under his command. I know no experience more awe-inspiring than to climb the ladder of a battleship and mount her quarter-deck for

the first time. You gaze up at stern figures in white-peaked caps and smart blue uniforms, each with his telescope under his arm, who glance down upon you with eyes seemingly animated by ill-concealed suspicion at the sight of an unwelcome intruder. Never forget when you take your first step on to the quarter-deck to raise your hat to the officer of the watch, who meets you at the gangway. The moment you are on the quarter-deck, an intense feeling of loneliness comes over you. You feel a stranger in a strange land and that you will never become accustomed to the automaton figures who stride about amongst the armour and the guns. The officer of the watch inquires your business, and on telling him you have been assigned to the ship, his first step is to take you down to the captain. At such a moment, you are delighted to disappear down any ladder to escape the gaze of the many eyes peering at you from every point of vantage. You feel in fact like some new specimen arriving for the first time in the unfamiliar atmosphere of the Zoological Gardens.

"YOU SEE BEFORE YOU A MIDDLE-AGED, GREY-HAIRED MAN, CLEAN-SHAVEN AND DETERMINED-LOOKING, SITTING AT A DESK PILED HIGH WITH PAPERS AND CHARTS."

Down a ladder you descend to make your way aft, pass an ante-room and then come to a door. The officer of the watch knocks before entering. A voice that sounds horribly gruff says, "Come in," and you enter for the first time the Holy of Holies in which sits the tyrant of the castle, at whose mercy you will remain during the whole time you are on board. Most people are acquainted with the interior economy of a battleship. It always seems to me as if the captain has one quarter of the ship to himself, the twenty or thirty odd officers another quarter to themselves, and the eight hundred men of the crew crowd into the remaining half as best they can. The captain's saloon, in times of peace, looks extremely luxurious and comfortable, with its sofas and chairs, tables and handsome bookcases, its carpets and light curtains which give it the air of a lady's boudoir. But in time of war all the trappings are taken down, the carpets rolled up, and all the woodwork is removed so as to minimize the fear of fire in action. You see before you a middle-aged, grey-haired man, clean-shaven and determined-looking, sitting at a desk piled high with papers and charts. He rises as you enter and greets you in a courtly and kindly manner that at once puts you at your ease, and makes you feel that the tyrannical baron of the castle is fortunately in a good humour on this particular occasion. He invites you to sit down on his only remaining sofa and to have a whisky and soda or a cup of tea. A talk on the war follows, then he remarks that he has heard from the admiral that you are to be his guest; he hopes your stay will be agreeable, and that he himself will do everything to ensure your comfort as far as the circumstances will permit. He then asks if you would like to visit the wardroom and make the acquaintance of the officers. He conducts you through the ante-room, then through a steel door which, when closed, forms one of the water-tight compartments of the ship, and you then enter a large oblong apartment with a long table ranged down one side of it, and the other half full of comfortable chairs and sofas, a piano, a book-shelf, and one or two green tables on which stand the inevitable dice-boxes, for at sea it is sacrilege to have a drink without first tossing for it. Some sixteen or twenty officers are sitting or lolling in all attitudes in the chairs or on the sofas. They rise as the captain enters; the commander comes forward and you are formally introduced to him and handed over to his care by the captain. The commander then makes an heroic effort to introduce you to the other officers, but it is impossible in the confusion to catch many of the names, and, in fact, on a battleship it takes weeks to learn who everybody is, because nearly everybody is known by pet-names, and you hardly ever hear them called by anything else.

You are amazed at the change in the atmosphere. The stiffness, formality, and iron etiquette of the quarter-deck disappears the

moment you go down below and enter the wardroom, and you find yourself amongst a charming and jovial lot of companions, whose sole desire in life seems to be to make you feel at home and one of themselves. After the introductions are over comes the inevitable, "Have a cocktail," and whether you want it or not you might just as well say "yes," because you won't be let off without at least one or two. Now, cocktails on battleships are the most remarkable concoctions known to man. In the Mediterranean various ships in which I stayed frequently ran out of all the ingredients which are considered necessary for the production of these pernicious but delightful "end-hasteners" on land. Ice was seldom available; gin, the basis of almost every cocktail, was generally lacking; Italian and French vermouth seldom if ever present at the same time; but nevertheless the messman could always produce a wonderful browny golden-looking substance in glasses three times as large as the ordinary cocktail glass. To take one of these changes your entire outlook on life. Whatever your troubles, anxieties, or discomforts, a wonderful serenity suffuses your soul the moment you have poured this nectar of the wardroom down your parched throat. Two of them will transport you to those wonderful realms where the imagination of the opium-smoker loves to dwell for hours at a time. Three of them will instil into you an unnatural courage, which had it been practical would have taken the form of rushing upon the nearest Turks and tearing them into a thousand pieces, after the manner of that prince of all knights-errant, Amadis of Gaul.

"THE COMMANDER THEN MAKES AN HEROIC EFFORT TO INTRODUCE YOU TO THE OTHER OFFICERS."

The commander having found you a cabin, you are left to your own reflections and the disposal of your kit until the dinner-hour. Just before that meal starts is the great moment when the dice-boxes rattle and the keen competition of throwing the aces commences. In some ships the captain comes in and has an *apéritif* with his officers. This is as a rule the only occasion on which the dictator enters the officers' mess. Long years of etiquette prescribe that the captain must live and eat absolutely by himself. He is the most lonely figure in the universe. He may be socially inclined, but he must suppress his proclivities and conform to the custom of centuries. His meals are served in solitary state and even when they are over he cannot come into the wardroom to play a quiet rubber or listen to the latest ragtime on the inevitable gramophone. Very occasionally he has a guest or one of the officers to dine with him, and usually the midshipman of the watch takes his breakfast with him. On only one ship have I known this iron rule broken. There the captain, one of the best-known characters in the Navy, declined absolutely to lead the life of Simon Stylites on his lonely tower. He dined every night in the wardroom and was the most jovial figure present. He was, in fact, the life and soul of the officers' mess, and the most newly-promoted lieutenant could meet him on equal terms during these short hours of relaxation. No one dared to take advantage of his good nature, and the moment he appeared on the quarter-deck that iron wall of etiquette and discipline divided him completely from those under his command. But this, as I have said, was an exceptional case, and the captain had an exceptional character. The object of keeping the captain absolutely apart from his officers is the fear that discipline might suffer were this rule in any way departed from. Although the essentials of discipline are the same, the atmosphere of every ship varies according to the character of her captain. His influence is felt throughout every grade from the wardroom to the stokehold. The officers and crew seem to, insensibly perhaps, model themselves on the lines of their captain's disposition. The purely local social atmosphere of the wardroom is perhaps determined more by the character of the commander, who is in direct charge of it, rather than the captain.

After a short stay on a battleship it is easy to understand the tales of the life on board warships a hundred years ago. At that time ships would be at sea for months at a time, and everybody on board was directly under the captain's orders, who could exercise his authority in a hundred pleasant or unpleasant ways. A tyrannical captain could make his vessel a hell on earth, whereas a kind-hearted, humane commander could keep all hands a happy family even during long periods on the sea. The spirit

of the age, the spread of democracy, and new codes have changed the customs of the old days, and there is no such thing as a tyrannical captain afloat at the present day. Ships are seldom long at sea, and if the crew were discontented they would vent their feelings in any port every three or four days. But this is seldom, if ever, the case. The discipline of the Navy may seem severe to the untutored civilian, but it is invariably exercised with justice and discretion, and the spirit which prevails between officers and men is one of mutual confidence and respect. The laws of the Navy lay down clearly exactly what a captain may do, but, of course, a great deal depends on the manner in which orders are carried out; for a command coming from one man may be a pleasure to perform, whereas coming from another it may lead to endless grumbling and discontent.

Our warships off the Dardanelles were a study of peculiar interest, largely owing to the scratch character of their crews, hastily brought together at the general mobilization. Some of the officers had been out of the Service for a long time, and others belonging to the mercantile marine had only served a short period each year on warships. Some of the older reservists, amongst the men, had almost forgotten their former life at sea; and many of the young, newly-joined boys had to complete their training under the fire of the enemy's guns. But it was remarkable how soon these divergent elements adjusted themselves to their surroundings and became an efficient whole. The work of the crews was extremely hard throughout 1915, and told heavily on some of the elder men who had lost their youth and the habit of prolonged toil, broken by short spells of rest. The duties of the Navy at the Dardanelles were manifold. Not only were the ships constantly in action against the forts, but they had to detail numbers of officers and men as beach-parties for the landing of men and supplies. Many others were kept busy sometimes night and day in the steam pinnaces which had to drag all the lighters to the landing-stages from the trawlers and transports. There are, in fact, a thousand odd things always waiting for the sailor to carry out. He never seems to get any real rest, for the unexpected is always happening.

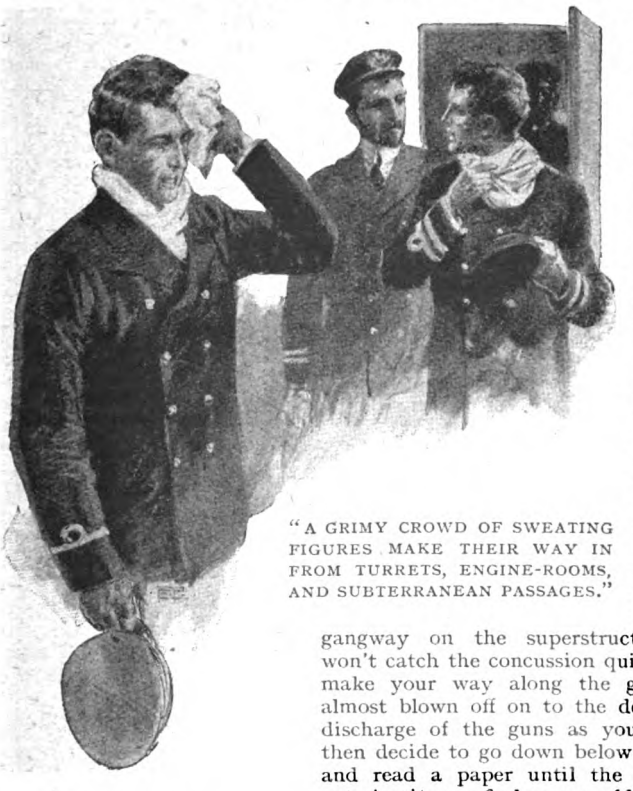
To my mind, the most interesting figures on a battleship are perhaps the midshipmen. There are generally some twenty of these young gentlemen in the gunroom. Some of them, straight from Dartmouth, were only fifteen years of age. To them, of course, the expedition was a vast pleasure trip, and they would not have exchanged their places with the happiest monarch on any throne—if there is such a thing as a happy monarch in this troubled age. They occupy a curious position on a warship, for in fact they do not seem to have any real status at all. They are neither officers, warrant officers, nor able seamen. The officers treat them with the utmost scorn, and with a kindly severity, always excusing their harshness with the stock remark that "these 'Snotties' think they can do what they jolly well please now. It was very different when I first joined the Service."

"THE MOST INTERESTING FIGURES ON A BATTLESHIP ARE PERHAPS THE MIDSHIPMEN."

The warrant officers also treat them with good-natured contempt, and in fact the unfortunate midshipman has a pretty hard time, even now, in his early days at sea. The golden rule for him is to always be at everybody's disposal and never to utter a word of remonstrance, even though he be suffering under a sense of injustice, because then his persecutor having a bad case to start with will turn from his original objective and call him to task for daring to answer back. The midshipmen only get their own back when they are away from a ship in charge of the boats and pinnaces. Their humble attitude then changes, they themselves assume an attitude towards the crews under their charge, which is only on a par with what they themselves have been subjected to. It is certainly a novel experience to see a youth of fifteen, not five feet high, ordering a boatload of veterans, some of them old enough to be his grandfather, to do his bidding, in a voice, accompanied by a look, that would cause even the bravest of Napoleon's marshals to tremble in his presence. The courage of these youths is inspiring, and ensures the future stability of the Anglo-Saxon race. They landed with the first parties on the shore of Gallipoli under a tremendous fire on that historic twenty-fifth of April. For month after month they were employed with dangerous work, taking the pinnaces to the beaches under a heavy shell fire, or dwelling under similar conditions on the beaches themselves. Dangerous excursions up the Dardanelles varied these proceedings. If they wanted a holiday, their great joy was to get ashore, and wander along shell-strewn roads and amidst the snipers until they came to the front trenches. Some have been killed, and many wounded, but

their dauntless spirit of enterprise remains the same.

The gunroom, where the midshipmen live, has a severe discipline of its own. They are under the charge of a sub-lieutenant, who visits the slightest breach of any custom or etiquette in that summary manner not unknown in the public schools of both England and America. It is in this iron school that our future generation of naval officers are being brought up, and if there is no further good at present discernible from our unfortunate descent on Gallipoli, we have at least in a few months crowded the experience and knowledge into a hundred of our younger officers, which, in normal times, they would have taken years to obtain.

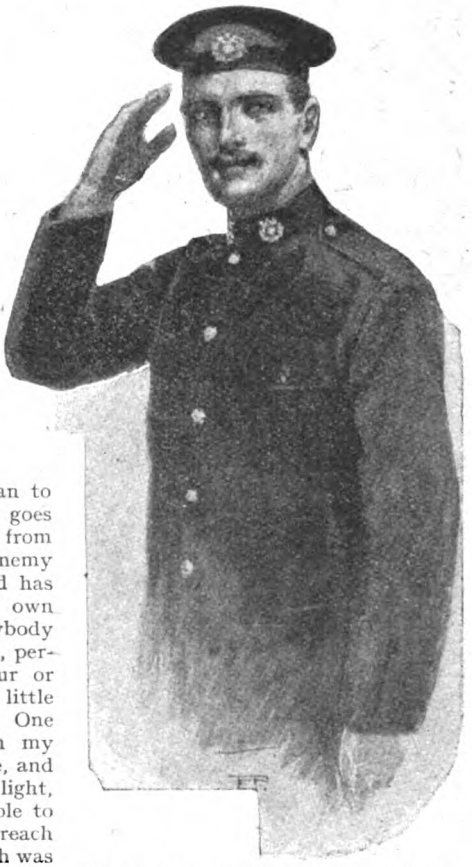


"A GRIMY CROWD OF SWEATING FIGURES MAKE THEIR WAY IN FROM TURRETS, ENGINE-ROOMS, AND SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGES."

The life on a battleship on active service takes a very great deal of getting used to. It cannot be described as comfortable, but on the whole I consider it preferable to that led by the soldier on land. For instance, in the Mediterranean even in the heat of the summer all port-holes had to be closed down and all lights extinguished after sunset, even when lying in the protected harbours. This naturally made the ship very stuffy, but it does not seem to have affected the health of the crew. I attribute this to the short time that the men sleep at any one period, and to the sea air. The acme of discomfort is reached when a ship is firing her big gun. Personally I never could get accustomed to the noise of the terrific concussion of modern weapons. You seek in vain for some quarter where you will catch the concussion the least. All depends on the angle at which the guns are being fired. If you are standing on the fore-bridge, and the turret guns are trained right forward, it is not so bad. You hear the deafening roar and the whole of your horizon is blotted out with the dense clouds of yellow cordite, and you hear the shell speeding towards its objective so many thousand yards away. You have just said to yourself, "Oh, this is not so bad after all," when you feel as if both your ear-drums had been blown right inside your head by the discharge of a six-inch gun in one of the batteries, the muzzles of which are almost level with the bridge on which you stand. The gun having gone off on the starboard quarter, you rush to port, just in time to catch a similar welcome on that side, which blows you back again to the centre of the bridge. You think you are going to get a moment's respite, in which to recover your numbed senses, when the small twelve-pounders go off like a crack of a stock-whip just underneath you. You can only put your hands to your head, hoping that firing will cease, when you have them blown away by the twelve-inch. You would speedily lose your hearing if you did not carry cotton-wool or patent ear protectors in your ears, but even as it is, many officers are rendered deaf, and some have had their drums damaged by being caught near the muzzle by an unexpected discharge. After standing this for some time, you decide to leave the fore-bridge and run aft along the narrow gangway on the superstructure, where you won't catch the concussion quite so much. You make your way along the gangway and are almost blown off on to the deck below by the discharge of the guns as you go along. You then decide to go down below to the wardroom and read a paper until the firing stops. On entering it, you find a scene of horrible confusion. In some ships more lightly constructed than others, you will find the woodwork all torn and cracked by the concussion of the guns overhead. In vessels of a stronger build, you will find chairs overturned, the tablecloths lying in heaps on the floor, masses of books and papers scattered everywhere, and glasses that have been left about smashed to atoms, and the atmosphere composed of a fine dust which settles over everything like the lava of a volcano. You remain alone amid this scene of wreckage until the firing is over, because all the officers have to remain at their battle stations, and cannot leave until the "disperse" is sounded. Then a grimy crowd of sweating figures make their way in from turrets, engine-rooms, and subterranean passages, and fling themselves down in the nearest chairs. The bell is rung furiously for the mess marines, who hasten in straight from the guns, and serve a round of drinks before beginning to clear up

the horrible mess and to lay the table for luncheon.

Night firing is particularly interesting. When lying off the Dardanelles in the early days, a message would suddenly come on board to fire at such and such a square on the map, where the enemy might be showing signs of activity and threatening to attack our lines. This brings the captain out of his bed on to the bridge, "Battle stations" is sounded, and you hear feet scampering from every hole and corner like rats in an old barn. If you happen to be awake, you put on a few clothes and hasten on deck yourself just in time to see a terrific burst of red flame from the turret like an immense explosion of a huge land mine. The firing goes on and you see the shells bursting in great red spheres, thousands of yards away, carrying the eternal message of hate from the Christian to the Infidel. The firing goes on until orders come from the shore that the enemy has taken the hint and has gone back to his own trenches. Then everybody tumbles into bed again, perhaps only for an hour or two, to be disturbed a little later to open up again. One night I was asleep in my cabin on the port side, and after putting out my light, had opened the port-hole to let in a little air—a breach of the regulations which was winked at in very hot weather. I was sleeping soundly, when suddenly I found myself flying through space and deposited amidst a number of trunks and overturned chairs on the floor of my cabin. The room was full of yellow, sulphurous smoke, and it took me some time to collect my senses. In fact the scene was exactly similar to the popular representation of the Old Man's abode in "Pilgrim's Progress." What had happened was this: Orders had suddenly been received on board to open fire on a certain square on the map, and as we were lying bow to the shore it necessitated training the port six-inch guns right ahead along the side of the ship. Unfortunately, the muzzle of one of these was almost flush (at this particular angle) with my cabin window, and when the gun was discharged I caught the full benefit of the concussion, with the disastrous results I have related. I went outside into the passage and found a friendly marine, who said he would close my port-hole—an offer I was only too willing to accept. He knelt on the bed, and before he had time to screw it down there came a second discharge, which blew him bang out of the cabin, through the doorway, and deposited him, emitting horrible language, at my feet. A sailor then came up and rushed in, closed it before the next discharge, and, the smoke having cleared, the three of us proceeded to clear up the remains of the Government's and my own property which had survived this unequal contest.



"I WENT OUTSIDE INTO THE PASSAGE AND FOUND A FRIENDLY MARINE, WHO SAID HE WOULD CLOSE MY PORTHOLE."

Naval battles are now very different from what they were in the days of Nelson. A different sort of courage is required, what the French describe as "*le courage froid*"—that is to say, men no longer fight face to face, seeing their comrades around them, and with their eyes fixed on the enemy, forty or fifty yards away. The scenes on the open decks of the old three-deckers must have been horrible enough, but then men had a chance of seeing red, and, their blood being up, they would forget their surroundings in the excitement of the contest. On every deck hundreds of men would be busy loading and discharging the guns, the deafening record of the broadsides would deaden the senses to the enemy's shots sweeping through the open port-holes, killing and maiming dozens at a time. Pools of blood made the decks slippery for the fighters. Arms and legs and fragments of humanity lay around, while a constant stream of wounded would be borne to the dim recesses of the cockpit, afar down in the hold, there to have their limbs amputated without chloroform under conditions which have happily passed for ever. At any moment might come the call to repel boarders, or to board one of the enemy's ships. Then this crowd of semi-savages, stripped to the waist, black with powder or red with blood, rushed to the upper deck with ferocious yells to climb along the booms and yards to the enemy's decks, and there carry on a hand-to-hand fight until they were annihilated or he was forced to yield. Every man could see what his comrade was doing and follow his officer to glory or destruction. It was amid scenes such as these that our greatest naval hero lived and died. They were awful

enough, it is true, but I have already said that this primitive mode of hand-to-hand fighting appeals more to the brute instincts of man, and I think calls for a lower level of courage than the long-range engagements of the present day. Let me describe what a battleship is like in action under modern conditions.

The essential difference between life in the Army and the Navy on active service is the manner in which the Navy continues its normal life right up to the commencement of an engagement, and the way in which both officers and men take all their worldly possessions into action with them, whereas the soldier leaves everything behind. A battleship in this respect resembles the self-contained feudal castle of which I have already spoken. You can leave your cabin in the morning, go to the wardroom, and there sit down at a comfortable table covered with a nice clean white cloth, on which are spread all the comforts which the ships can provide at this particular moment. Half an hour later "Battle stations" may sound, and you find yourself steaming towards the enemy. On active service a ship is always ready for action, and the final preparations take about five minutes. Thus your normal life continues right up to the psychological moment when the bugle sounds the call to "Battle stations." You can have your bath and shave and dress just as on any other morning of the year. There may be a suppressed air of excitement, and you may notice the crew moving about more briskly, but that is all. A marine enters your cabin, shuts the port-hole, and carefully screws down the steel shutters. You will find others engaged in a similar task in the wardroom. On deck the crew are busy closing the companion-ways and skylights, fastening down the steel shutters and removing the deck-rail, so that there is nothing to interfere with the fire of the guns. Between decks others are busy stowing all the hammocks down below and removing anything which is inflammable. Others are closing the water-tight doors, until it becomes difficult for the layman to move from one part of the ship to another. These simple preparations having been made the officers again reassemble in the wardroom, from which most of the furniture has been removed. All are in their oldest and dirtiest working clothes, stained with oil and smoke, and a friendly discussion takes place as to what is the best thing to do in the event of the ship striking a mine, and which is really the most efficient type of lifebelt. Suddenly "General quarters" is sounded, and the whole party double off to their respective posts, leaving you, the unoccupied onlooker, to roam about the ship as you please. I will merely relate my own experiences.

I first visit the starboard battery, which is deserted, because there is no object in manning the small twelve-pounders, as their crews would not be behind armour. There are two six-inch casements in this battery, and I glance into these. Here the crews are busy getting ready the guns, arranging the hundred-pound shells, and hauling up ammunition from the passages beneath. Except for these four casements, the upper part of the ship seems to be quite deserted, so I descend to the main deck, where I run across the fleet engineer, who carries a somewhat bored look. I ask him where his station is in action. "When I am not wanted in the engine-room I wander about and try to learn what is happening. It is very dull down below, cut off from all the news."

I descend another iron ladder and find myself in what is known as "Bag Flats," and I meet the parson, who says, "Come and see the sick-bay, where I stay during action." I pass along endless stuffy passages crowded with men and boys, who seem to have nothing to do except to sit still and wonder whether the ship will strike a mine or not; and after passing through innumerable doors, some of which are closed after me, I enter the sick-bay, which is equally crowded. Here is the fleet surgeon and his assistants, ready to handle any casualties. Knives, saws, lint, basins, chloroform, are all laid out with that neatness and precision which is typical of everything in the Navy. The sight is depressing, and the atmosphere so stuffy that I speedily accept the invitation of the chief gunner to descend to another floor to the ammunition-passages and see the six-inch shell-room. On the way I pass the lieutenant-commander and a lot of men, and I ask him what his job is. His reply is: "We have to wait until the ship catches fire, and we then try to put it out."

In the ammunition passages I find men busy placing six-inch shells in canvas carriers, and hoisting them up by pulleys to the six-inch casements. I then glance into a small room which contains innumerable speaking-tubes, navyphones and telephones, electric bells, wires, and electric plant. This is the transmitting room, and all the range and results of shots taken in the control chamber on the foretop are telephoned down here to be passed on to the various guns. It all seems confusing and incomprehensible to the lay mind. Every step you take you stumble over or on fresh machinery. Below decks is a jumble of electric engines, hydraulic steam pumps, wires, tubes, 'phones, and a hundred other complications of science, until you wonder how any mind can ever master their use.

The gunner then says, "Would you like to see the cordite chamber?" I climb through a round hole and descend a steel ladder. It is amazing how many decks a battleship has. I have, in fact, now gone down so many that I have lost count; all I know is that I am a long way below the water level, and somewhere near the double bottom.

When I reach the starboard battery once again, I do not see a soul. Everyone has vanished below armour as if by magic, and we are slowly steaming towards the enemy. It is, however, pleasant to find oneself again in the fresh air, and to be able to see with your own eyes what is happening. I feel sincerely sorry for the hundreds whom I have just left below. I make my way towards the conning-tower. The captain is standing just outside it, and invites me to enter. I find myself in a little, round steel chamber, with an opening about eight

inches high all round at the top. It is packed with eleven officers and men. One is at a tiny little wheel, which looks hardly big enough to control a Thames launch, but the great ship is responding to every turn. I then leave the conning-tower and make for my final destination, which is the control station on the foretop. The ascent is made by a steel ladder, and before you can enter the fighting-top you have to turn a corner, climb out of the shrouds, and then up through a kind of small coal-hole, such as you see in any London street. I hate this climb, which is terrifying to one who is not accustomed to climb great heights in a wind on a pole stuck on a moving and very often highly unsteady platform. The weather has been very bad all the morning, with storms of wind and rain, which at this moment almost blot out the shore and the battered forts of Seddul Bahr and Gaba Tepe. On safely negotiating the shrouds and the coal-hole, I find myself in a small, oblong chamber of thin steel, which would not even keep out a bullet fired at close range. It is open all round at the top, and has a similar thin steel roof. Inside are a lieutenant of marines, a naval lieutenant, two midshipmen, and three sailors, a rangefinder, several pairs of glasses, some telescopes, and the eternal voice pipe, navyphones and telephones for speaking to the conning-tower, the engine-room, the batteries, and the transmitting station. We are very crowded, and our tempers are ruffled by the heavy rain. My sensations are very strange when I find myself aloft. They are quite different from those you get when you are about to go into action on land. A feeling of intense insecurity comes over me, and also one of extreme loneliness. On the ship beneath, not a soul is visible, all are hidden below, and will know nothing until it is all over. In an hour they will probably be still safe and sound, or else drowned like rats in a huge trap. The thought occurs to me that it is very strange to be perched up there, a hundred feet above the sea, with a ship full of high explosives beneath you, and a sea which you imagine must be full of mines beneath the ship. Then a kind of feeling follows that you have lost your individual existence, and are merely a fitting on this great steel monstrosity which is gliding so slowly, yet remorselessly, towards the danger zone. You say to yourself, "Whatever happens, we shall all survive or go together," and you have the satisfaction of feeling that you cannot be left lying wounded on the battlefield. The land on either side looks so firm and secure, whilst up on the fighting-top you cannot shake off the feeling of some great, unknown danger, such as you have never faced before, continually lurking around you.

"ONE IS AT A TINY LITTLE WHEEL, WHICH LOOKS HARDLY BIG ENOUGH TO CONTROL A THAMES LAUNCH, BUT THE GREAT SHIP IS RESPONDING TO EVERY TURN."

Unlike conditions in the Army, there is not that margin for individual error, and but few have to receive special instructions, because each of the eight hundred odd minds on board knows his special place and special job in action, and all he has to do is to double there as quickly as he can when the bugle announces that the real work is about to commence. One brain alone controls everything on board, and that is the captain's, who is in the conning-tower with a small staff of assistants. Thus when a battleship goes into action, only the captain knows where she is going and what she is doing. All the responsibility rests with him alone, and the majority of the ship's company, buried deep down between decks at their stations, are led blindly to victory or destruction without seeing, hearing, or knowing what is taking place. They are engaged in purely mechanical tasks, such as stoking, passing up ammunition, minding the engines, or working the guns. The final efficiency of a ship's company can, of course, be estimated,

not by what the captain does in action, but the manner in which the several tasks are carried out.

Thus it will be seen how different the conditions are to what they were in the days of the old three-deckers. Ninety-five per cent. of those on board see nothing at all, and simply have to carry on with their mechanical tasks, leaving the control of their destinies to fate and to the guiding hand of the captain and his staff in the conning-tower. It is nerve-racking work, this modern fighting, because if the ship strikes a mine or is torpedoed, it is extremely difficult to get the men up from far below, and many are immediately drowned with the inrush of water. Also no individual knows how the engagement is going and whether he is on the winning side or the losing, and he has not got the excitement of fighting the enemy face to face. I think the vast majority of men would rather fight on the open decks of the old three-deckers, with their comrades around them and the enemy only a few yards away, than be shut up in these mighty battleships, which look so strong, and which are yet so vulnerable to the torpedo and the mine. It is certainly a strain on the nerves when you are in the conning-tower or the fighting-top, and can see what is going on, but it is a much greater strain when you see nothing and hear little, except the swish of the ship as she rushes through the water to victory or destruction, and the dull detonations of the guns being fired overhead. In some of the minor engagements in the Straits, when we were shelling the enemy's batteries and they returning our fire, familiarity having bred a certain measure of contempt, it was extremely difficult to prevent some of the officers and men coming out on deck. It used to be a regular game to leave the conning-tower or batteries and to have a look around, and then to rush back again to cover like hunted rabbits when you heard a shell coming. Every one of these sounded as if it were going to land plump in the centre of the ship, but fortunately the majority are fired high, and pass overhead, or else damage the funnels, the fighting-tops, and the stays. The effect of shells striking a ship's armour is to give her a shock, which causes her to shiver all over. A dense cloud of smoke then comes aboard and there is a rattling sound as bits of the shell fall about or smash the boats. I saw a very funny sight on one occasion, for we had had a long morning's work bombarding both the European and Asiatic batteries, the enemy replying vigorously, but his aim was bad and we were not hit. Suddenly there was a terrific crash followed by an explosion and a cloud of smoke, and an eight-inch shell landed in the superstructure, smashing two boats, and the fragments falling in the port battery. Immediately the fire party rushed forward in case there was a blaze, but on this occasion there was none, and the next minute everybody about the decks made a rush to the spot to collect fragments of the shell as souvenirs. Most of the battleships that were damaged at the Dardanelles were struck by shells falling vertically on to their decks, either from howitzers or long-distance fire. The wardrooms suffered especially, and it has been the lot of the officers on several ships on going down to refresh themselves at the end of an engagement, to find the wardroom and everything in it smashed into a kind of jelly, a great hole through the ceiling, another in the floor, and the chairs, tables, sofas, piano, and bookcases all mixed up together and spoilt beyond repair. I know of one fleet paymaster who had two shells through his cabin in the same engagement, and he couldn't find even a change of linen in the general mix-up.

But in spite of its dangers and discomforts, it is a grand life to be on a battleship in war-time, as long as the submarines will keep away from you. But when they are about your life is one long-drawn-out misery until you have reached the shelter of a protected harbour. You feel so strong, and yet you are so helpless, and after a time any object floating in the water, which may possibly be a periscope, sends a cold shiver down your spine.

Do not miss the writer's thrilling account next month of how he went down on the "Majestic."

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 36.

Let these directions plainly be expressed:
Go neither to the East, nor to the West.

1. As lead is sometimes useful, here we see
   More than two thousand pounds, and less than three.
2. The tragic tale of lovely innocence,
   Friend's perfidy and fatal consequence.
3. Three letters from a famous man must go,
   And will, when rearranged, his nickname show.
4. Not much at home, but, sought on foreign ground,
   It will with superstructure soon be found.
5. The rider by his parents first is left,
   Then last but three is of the rest bereft.
6. Many there are, by many seen and known,
   And yet no man has ever seen his own.
7. Our boots are what an isle, reversed, will tell;
   That island bore this other name as well.
8. In one we find a man, in one a fruit,
   One shows a garden, one suggests a suit.
9. An endless source of income; turn it round,
   An endless source of income it is found.
10. Monosyllabic word will tell of fives;
    One letter changed recalls a tale of wives.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 36 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, The Strand Magazine, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on November 8th.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

With their answers to this acrostic solvers must send also their names and addresses.

Answer to No. 34.

1. S	a	C
2. E	ll	E
3. R	ecove	R
4. I	ntim	E
5. A	lfalf	A
6. L	etha	L

Notes.—Light 1. Sacred. 4. Because always in time. 5. Lucerne. 6. Let Hal.

Answer to No. 35.

1. S	choo	L
2. T	ornad	O
3. R	eligio	N
4. A	bandone	D
5. N	egr	O
6. D	itto	N

Notes.—Light 3. *Li*, a Chinese cash, in "region." 4. Abandoned, left; "and" is in the word. 6. Ditto, the same. On the Thames.

"'OH!' SHE CRIED, AND CUDDLED A PIECE OF WORK TO HER BOSOM."

Comforts for the Troops.

By
MAY EDGINTON.

Illustrated by
Treyer Evans.

WHEN Colonel Johnson-Biggs had delivered his entertaining little lecture on "The Proper Making of Sandbags from the Soldier's Point of View," or as he chivalrously put it, "Rough Work for Fair Fingers," he began his progress around his garden, where all the neighbourhood clustered under the leadership of Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, to see for himself how sandbags were made from the ladies' point of view. He expressed himself amazed and delighted. He said that never did the homesick soldier dream of the love and forethought and insight and output to be seen in that garden this autumn afternoon.

When he had made the round of the elder ladies, he made the round of the younger ones, with whom he lingered longer; and at length there came that blissful moment for which Colonel Johnson-Biggs had been waiting throughout the afternoon—the moment when he should approach a very demure figure drawn a little apart under the chestnut-tree, bent over her work.

He had judged her, from his distance, to be the youngest sandbag-worker of all.

Approaching her readily in the exercise of his duty, Colonel Johnson-Biggs was happy in observing the infinite littleness of her white blouse, the way her red hair curled under her modest hat, and the sweet meekness of her profile.

She was the dearest little thing.

"Now, my dear young lady," said Colonel Johnson-Biggs, tenderly, "let us see how *you* manage these dreadfully, dreadfully hard bags. Oh! how perfectly *dreadfully* hard they are for those poor fin——"

When the Colonel's face came suddenly over her shoulder she uttered a little scream.

"*Oh!*" she cried, and cuddled a piece of work to her bosom.

"You are making comforts for the troops," said Colonel Johnson-Biggs, smiling.

"That," she replied, modestly, "is a matter of opinion."

"Let me form my opinion," said the Colonel, persuasively.

It was not a sandbag which she held. The sandbags lay heaped upon her knee, and beneath their cover, drawn, as she was, so modestly aside, as if for the purpose of uninterrupted industry, from the rest of the workers, this young girl had been surreptitiously making something else.

"My dear young lady," said the Colonel,

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as soft as a dove, as he took the vacant end of the garden seat, beside her, "I have come to inspect your work, and it looks to me perfectly entrancing; it is indeed thoughtful of you to make something which a soldier will really appreciate, and how much more suitable for those little fin——"

"Henry!" said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, powerfully, from afar.

"Oh," gasped the dear little girl, "don't let them see!"

The Colonel knew Mrs. Johnson-Biggs. He knew how wonderful was her rapidity of movement in contrast to the stateliness of her bulk, and glancing over his shoulder, he beheld her advancing, almost at the double.

Colonel Johnson-Biggs had strategy. As the little girl looked up at him with big beautiful eyes he whipped the article swiftly into his pocket.

"I hope," he said, clearly, "that you measured your sandbags. It may seem to all you ladies unduly particular, but, as I remarked in my address just now, uniformity is *the* factor of success."

Mrs. Johnson-Biggs arriving, took him by the arm and led him away.

When the Colonel had leisure to glance towards the chestnut-tree again the little girl had gone.

He sought solitude at the first opportunity, drew from his pocket the soft thing upon which she had been sewing, and examined it.

He smiled.

It made him think of little shops in Burlington Arcade.

The tiniest rosebuds meandered upon it into the letters "D. L.," and the inscription "Dora" ran over one shoulder-strap.

"Sweet!" he said to himself; "very sweet! I am glad they are all having this pale pink just now. I must take great care of this, and give it back to her personally at the first opportunity. Or shall I trust it to the post?"

Deciding on the preferability of the first opportunity, the Colonel folded up the little thing and placed it in his letter-case. It was one of the nicest and slightest camisoles he had ever seen.

"I must find out her full name and address," he said, "just in case I have to post it."

That evening, after lauding Mrs. Johnson-Biggs's appearance, praising her organizing abilities, and commenting favourably on the dinner, the Colonel passed on skilfully to his question.

"The sandbags were excellent," said he, winningly. "I do not know what the country would do without women like you at this awful crisis, my love. I thought the work most reliable; in particular, there was a nice, sensible person, whose name I can't remember, except that it began with 'L.'"

"Not at my party," replied Mrs. Johnson-Biggs; "there was no one here whose name began with 'L.'"

"Quite a plain young person," said Colonel Johnson-Biggs, persuasively.

"I don't trace her," replied the lady, placidly.

"Very badly dressed," said Colonel Johnson-Biggs; "in fact, rather a foil to you, my dear. I was sorry for the young woman."

"No, Henry," the lady replied, firmly, "I have not the slightest idea whom you mean."

The fact that his leave was up in forty-eight hours now began to present itself very urgently to the Colonel.

He had reckoned—and reasonably—that quite a lot might have been done in those forty-eight hours.

But now?

He saw them flying by, with a dainty quest unfulfilled.

His sense of chivalry, however, grew stronger

"WITH A NEEDLE AND THREAD CULLED FROM HIS HOUSEWIFE, THE COLONEL SEWED 'D.L.'S' CAMISOLE INTO THE LINING OF HIS TUNIC."

and stronger. Not for a brigade would he have betrayed in the least iota the trust so touchingly reposed in him.

When the last half-hour came, he locked himself in the bathroom, away from Mrs. Johnson-Biggs's solicitudes, and with a needle and thread culled from his housewife sewed "D. L.'s" camisole into the lining of his tunic, near his field dressing.

In six hours he was in France, and in twenty-four a piece of spent shell, catching him upon the head, laid him low.

Colonel Johnson-Biggs was indeed fortunate in that the hospital for officers to which he was carried was the château of the aged but vigorous Comtesse de Claretć. Here officers of senior rank—the aristocrat would have no others—were nursed back to health and strength under the most devoted management. The Comtesse herself, in the garb of the French nursing sister, was omnipresent; sitting beside the beds of heroes from early morn to late evening; conversing with a gaiety and tenderness sternly forbidden to the younger nurses.

For some few hours Colonel Johnson-Biggs lay drowsy, in the carnation-scented and *décolleté* pyjamas of salmon silk with black buttons in which the Comtesse attired all patients at the Château Clareté, and it was but slowly that his brain struggled to piece life together, and fixed itself upon a worry.

He worried stupendously.

It was something to do with his tunic; he knew that. Plucking in a puzzled way at his salmon coat, he turned his eyes and saw the Comtesse sitting gracefully beside him, her head drooping rather sweetly and girlishly, in its chaste covering of folded white, beneath which were pulled, as at random, two or three little straggling red curls from the best hairdresser in Paris.

"Red hair," said the Colonel, pointing; "beautiful!"

"*Mon brave!*" replied the Comtesse, rebukingly, drooping her head a little lower.

The Colonel was singing softly:—

"Wrap me up in my old stable jacket——"

He repeated this line so often, and became so vexed over the vain repetition, that the Comtesse grew pettish. She had liked his face, but she did not like his song. It seemed to her *bourgeois*, unimaginative. She had a charming young captain in the next room, whose brunette charms were admirably suited to salmon colour; so she went away, and sent the senior M.O.

Colonel Johnson-Biggs was begging strenuously.

"Wrap—me—up—in—my—old—stable—jacket——"

"Certainly, certainly," said the M.O., obligingly. "Don't worry any more. It will be done."

"Why should I trust you?" said the Colonel, in a great state of melancholy.

"Well," replied the young man. "We are not exactly strangers; my practice, when I'm at home, is within a few miles of your place. I have had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Johnson——"

"This is friendly," said the Colonel; "this is friendly." He took the M.O.'s hand and cuddled it. "I remember you," he said, "all but your name. I have always thought you a nice young fellow. What a small world and how the war has jumbled it all up together. Now, doctor, now, my dear boy, I want—I want—I want——"

"Tell us what it is you do want?" replied the M.O., soothingly.

"You are a Scotsman, I think?" said the Colonel, dreamily. "That is all to the good."

"I have a proper sense of caution," the young man replied. "You may trust me."

"My dear feller," said Colonel Johnson-Biggs, "I want—I want——"

Unable to place it, he suddenly began again to sing:—

"Wrap—me—up——"

The M.O. touched the bell.

"Orderly," he said, with a wonderful intuition, "bring Colonel Johnson-Biggs's tunic."

The Colonel closed his eyes.

"Doctor," he whispered, "stitched into the lining there is a—— Wrap—me—up—in——"

He drifted off into slumber.

When he awoke again he had an unaccustomed sensation about his shoulders and chest, and the Comtesse sat with drooped head at his side.

"*Mon brave*," she said, enthusiastically.

The Colonel drew his bedclothes high, and under cover slipped his hand inside his pyjama coat.

They had put it on!

How the little strings strained!

But it was safe.

He looked softly at the Comtesse. "Beautiful red hair," he murmured.

The young doctor stood at the foot of the bed, a telegram in his hand.

"You are better, Colonel," he said, "and able to bear good news. But prepare yourself for it all the same. If we err, let it

be on the side of caution. Now, are you ready?"

"Ready!" replied the Colonel, like a soldier, and the Comtesse whispered caressingly, "Ah, *le brave, le brave!*"

"This telegram is from Mrs. Johnson-Biggs to me, in reply to one which I felt constrained to send her," said the M.O. "She has obtained a passport, and will be here very, very soon."

Colonel Johnson-Biggs received the news in silence.

"Can you bear more?" said the young doctor.

The Colonel nodded.

"She is here," said the M.O.

Mrs. Johnson-Biggs came forward, and clasped her husband emotionally, but with care.

"Oh, Henry!" she exclaimed.

The Comtesse rose, shrugged her shoulders, and tripped out.

"Oh, Henry!" said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, "how dreadful it was when I received the news from the War Office! If it hadn't been for Major Lawly here, who sent me a telegram saying you were actually in his care——"

Mrs. Johnson-Biggs paused.

"You are wearing very thin pyjamas," she added.

"The Comtesse's choice," said the M.O. "Let me explain to you that this is the Château de Clareté, generously lent by the Comtesse——"

"I think I already understand a great deal about her," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, coldly. "I am an observant woman. I can perceive, also, that my husband is wearing some extraordinary kind of vest, and I should like to examine——"

"Lawly," said the Colonel, taking a sudden grip across the fastenings of his pyjama coat, "*does it show through?*"

Mrs. Johnson-Biggs was a woman of quiet inflexibility. When you roused her, she appeared to sit down; but she was roused all the same. That was her way of tackling a thing. She now spoke with a bland calmness which no one had ever resisted.

"Let me see, Henry," said she. "I am your wife. I have a right to see everything."

She then unbuttoned the black buttons of the salmon coat, and beheld a little delicate camisole trying to perform a duty too great for it.

"Alice," said Colonel Johnson-Biggs, in a faint voice.

"Mrs. Johnson-Biggs," the R.A.M.C. major commenced, winningly.

Mrs. Johnson-Biggs sat down, folded her hands, and said in the clear tone which wronged and reasonable wives make it their proud boast to adopt:—

"We have been married for twenty-one years and two months. I can perfectly well remember the day when I entrusted my life to your keeping, Henry. I was a young girl full of the most beautiful ideals. I do not wish to dwell on various enlightenments and disillusions. They are the common lot of women. I was intensely surprised on more than one occasion. Never mind about it. I have always adopted that reasonable attitude. 'Men,' I have said to myself, 'are not as we are'; and aunt—who brought me up, Major Lawly—said it to me also. I remember so clearly and painfully how, on my wedding morning, as she placed the white wreath around my head, she whispered, 'Now, Alice, my poor child, you begin a life which——'"

"Alice," said the Colonel.

"Mrs. Johnson-Biggs," added the senior M.O.

"When I have finished what I was about to say, I shall ask for a detailed explanation, Henry," the lady replied.

She continued on her course, the utter reasonableness of which constituted in itself the most bitter reproach which a faithless man could be called upon to bear.

"Lawly," said the Colonel, seizing upon a pause, "I feel extremely unwell."

"Much as your husband is enjoying your society, madam," said the M.O., "I fear that I can only give you two minutes more."

He was blessed by such a look of gratitude from Colonel Johnson-Biggs as seldom passes between man and man.

"I will waive my further remarks in the case, Major Lawly," the lady replied, "and ask Henry for his explanation. Two minutes will suffice."

"I doubt it," said the M.O. "It would be better if it were postponed——"

"A minute and a half," cried Mrs. Johnson-Biggs. "Henry, I insist!"

"I have no wish, love," said Colonel Johnson-Biggs, mildly, "to keep from you any episode of a perfectly blameless chapter. You shall have it in detail, my dear. I will miss out nothing. You wish me to begin at the beginning?"

"From the very beginning," said the lady, firmly.

"It was a fine night," said the Colonel. "Above, heaven was sprinkled with stars—sprinkled with stars. Nay, powdered with

them would be nearer the mark. Beneath them human atoms lay sweating.

"They were men."

"One minute more," the M.O. remarked.

"Certainly, Doctor," the Colonel replied, obediently, and continued after the best war-correspondent style.

"Snow was upon the ground; it had fallen in a fine frizzle—nay, drizzle would be nearer the true significance—all day. Yes, all day it had fallen, and now night had fallen too. Near the men, who lay half-frozen upon the wet earth, animals stood. Faithful beasts.

"They were mules.

"You at home do not realize the mule.

"As I sat up, unshaven and unwashed—hardly in Piccadilly trim, I thought sardonically—one of the animals nozzled at an object growing from the ground. His wide eyes wondered. Did his thoughts turn to the plains of Araby?

"The daffodil was out."

"Positively," exclaimed the M.O., "you must stop. Mrs. Johnson-Biggs understands that in your fevered condition I cannot permit your very candid story to be finished to-day. I am sure that she is highly satisfied with what she has heard. Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, allow me to escort you outside."

In the spacious hall the lady faced the M.O., trembling. The young man was grave and thoughtful.

"Let me," he said, "satisfy your anxieties. I know the rest of the story."

He had done a little thinking at a fair pace.

"Then I will have it here and now," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs in her very quietest manner.

"Let us sit here," said the M.O., guiding her to a seat, "and I will give you the rest in a nutshell. Beginning at where your husband left off, we come to a cold dawn. He told you snow had fallen. As they marched on—I had this from an eye-witness—the Colonel was terribly cold. He had lost his change of underclothing, and his one set was in the hands of a laundress. They were passing through the yard of a deserted farm which was part of the property of a very great lady. She was also old. You will remember that? Suddenly there appeared a woman—the great lady herself, who had come to see if her *protégés* were still there. She saw that your husband was terribly cold, and stopped him. She admires the British officer intensely. 'You must put on something of mine,' she said, insistently. 'But what can I spare?' The matter ended with the Colonel giving his officers 'Eyes right!' the old lady going behind a haystack to the left, and denuding herself of the garment you saw. It is filmy, but in its qualities of warmth, silk——"

"That woman was the Comtesse de Claretć," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, with intuition only possible to a woman; and, moreover, to a wife.

"Was it?" replied the doctor, cautiously. But his brows knitted in thought.

"It is useless to deceive me," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, with a slight oscillation of her stately form, but an unbending poise of the head. "I see. That *woman!* It has all played into her wicked hands! She has worked up some sentimental bond between them, no doubt; while my poor Henry is wearing one of the—wearing one, she is wearing the companion. You apprehend me? It is like one's housemaid breaks a threepenny-bit."

"You must not take it too seriously, dear lady," said the M.O. "These are strange times. Men are more spiritual. They are full of fancy. I have seen not only such a garment as your husband is wearing, but a whole clothes-line—in miniature, of course—full of washing—in miniature, of course—strung across the front of a lorry. It was a tribute to some charming memory. You would not believe one half the pretty thoughts men have."

Mrs. Johnson-Biggs drew herself up with a hauteur not to be mistaken.

"The Comtesse is old enough to be your mother," said the M.O., with a splendid tact. But the lady went away, bitterly, undeceived.

The M.O. hastened back to his patient's side and found him fevered and fretting.

"Colonel," he said, "I have got you out of the hole; or, rather, perhaps I may say into a better hole. Your wife suspects the Comtesse."

He related the story he had so frankly given to Mrs. Johnson-Biggs.

"Marriage is a terrible state to enter," he said. "I myself have avoided it with a caution on which I pride myself, considering the determination of women. Women are born with a kind of invisible mobile squint, so that they can see back and front and around and upside-down all the time; so they deceive you while they steer straight for one object. In the course of a life which has not been exactly secluded I have met only one girl who did not wish to marry. She told me so herself, and her conduct confirmed her words,

"THE WRONGED WIFE ARRIVED AT THE EARLIEST PERMISSIBLE MOMENT, AND SHE SAT ON ONE SIDE OF THE BED WHILE THE COMTESSE SAT ON THE OTHER."

sir. She was a girl who could make herself a friend to a man without ulterior motive. A little girl, sir, with red hair, and feet about the size of that, and eyebrows that went like this, and a sort of way with her. She was the only single young woman I ever met whom I was not afraid I might marry."

"Doctor," the Colonel whispered, from his abstraction, "I have always underrated these newspaper men, but believe me theirs is not the cushy job it looks. In future, any kindness——"

Here, happily, he drifted into sleep.

Madame la Comtesse glided in, bearing herself with a girlish dignity inexpressibly charming.

Tearing himself from not unpleasant recollections, the M.O. recollected that he had some business with the ancient lady.

He told her about the camisole; and while at first one cannot pretend that she was pleased, she became extremely agreeable as the young doctor unfolded the plot and begged her to saddle herself with the pretty indiscretion.

"It might easily have been me," she said, nodding her head until the Parisian curls danced. "It is the kind of thing I do." She smiled like a rogue. "In my time, Doctor," she continued, "I have done a good deal of harm." She thought about the camisole for awhile, and it was soon evident that the story had grown upon her so pleasurably that she almost believed it herself.

She gave the M.O. a few swift and dainty reminiscences.

When the Colonel awoke he found her sitting by him again, and her smile was conspiratorial and tender.

During the night, moreover, she dreamed, until, waking, she believed implicitly the story of the haystack. Early in the morning she had the Colonel put into a pyjama-suit of pale blue silk, as more acceptable to his complexion. She took coffee with him.

The wronged wife arrived at the earliest permissible moment, and she sat on one side of the bed while the Comtesse sat on the other, and a stern moral battle raged for the body of Colonel Johnson-Biggs.

Each lady held one of his hands and spoke to and of him proprietorially.

The M.O. beheld the terrors of the married state for the briefest possible space that morning.

As for the Colonel, he refused to speak at all, and was fortunate in managing to pass most of the day in sleep.

The Comtesse declared her brave readiness to bear the brunt of the ensuing divorce. She herself, she vowed, would not desert her sick lover in this the hour of his dire need of her; there was much of the tigress, she said, in her composition.

She also looked upon Mrs. Johnson-Biggs rather pityingly, with a hint of the patronage of a belle.

Is it to be expected that any woman with the stately figure of Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, still in the prime of life, would take pity from another woman lying down?

Long afterwards she accounted for the beautiful mirage towards which she set her feet by the fact that she was on French soil, where people are so different.

The circumstance remains that on the R.A.M.C. Major's second visit that day to the sleeping Colonel she relinquished her husband's hand and followed the doctor out.

"Dr. Lawly—Major Lawly," she said, softly, "I—I—I fully realize everything."

Looking, the young man beheld an added glow in the matron's always richly-coloured cheek, and a familiar fear entered him.

"Do you think this is right of you?" said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, in a very womanly manner. "Do you not think we ought to consider? A woman in my position, with my prestige——"

"Madam?" replied the young doctor.

"It is plain to me," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, "what is your underlying motive, dear Dr. Lawly, for fostering this unhappy affair between my hitherto devoted husband and that unspeakable woman. Before you left your practice at home, I—I was not blind to the fact that—that—we met far more often than was strictly accidental or necessary. The meetings were obviously of your seeking, but I do not think I showed any recognition of this. I can trust myself. Why should I have feared?"

The young M.O. grew deadly pale. He drew out a handkerchief and wiped his wet face, and stammered a few incoherent words.

"Believe me," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, with the deepest womanliness, "if I thought we should be happy together, Arthur, I should not shrink from the publicity which would be involved. I do not undervalue your love, much as I may deplore your means to your end. You have acted treacherously, but no doubt you were desperate. Don't think I don't understand. You have paid me the highest compliment which a man can offer to a woman, and ah, how I appreciate it! You have, of course, used that creature merely as a cat's-paw. She has been a foolish dupe."

A sense of great deliciousness went through Mrs. Johnson-Biggs as she uttered these words.

"I pity her," she said, smiling.

The M.O. broke into a curious babbling, and ran away.

"Dear fellow," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, "he goes to his duties."

She paced the château gardens with feet which felt very light.

"Romance," she said to herself, "is the elixir of life to a woman's soul."

She was moved by her feminine compassion to take the Comtesse by the arm, beg her not to overstrain herself at her age, and, looking researchfully at the red curls, to murmur, "If you knew all!"

The Colonel continued to sleep.

Now the next day, when what one may consider to be an emotional drama was at its height, the young doctor received a communication.

A reinforcement of nurses from England, for whom he had lately applied, would be with him almost at once.

Among them, fresh as paint, demure as a daisy, was a littlish girl, about as high as *that*, with eyebrows that coquetted thus and thus. Her hair beneath her folded white cap was redder than the Comtesse's; it was a study in efficiency just to hear her starch rustle.

"Dora!" said the M.O., when he saw her. It was the first time he had called her Dora, although they had met often, going to and fro, in Warwickshire lanes; but it must be borne in mind that he was now approaching a state which, in a woman, would have been hysterical.

"Miss Weston," he added, more cautiously, as an afterthought.

The Colonel, by whose bedside they met, opened one eye with extreme nervousness. But Mrs. Johnson-Biggs and the Comtesse were away together, pacing the château gardens, each capping with vim the other's stories of her past and vision for her future.

The British matron, when she does a thing thoroughly, does a thing thoroughly. There is no woman in the world to beat her.

The Colonel opened both eyes.

"Respite," he murmured, "respite!"

He beheld an unforgettable pair of eyebrows.

"'D. L.'!" he exclaimed.

"Hush!" said the little nurse, sweetly. "You are wandering."

"'D. L.'!" said the Colonel, insistently.

She placed a small hand lightly on his mouth for a moment. It was pleasant. She was smiling.

She was a jolly minx.

"He is wandering," she repeated to the doctor.

"Certainly," the young man replied.

He stood there looking pensively at the only woman in the world who had never made him fear that he might marry her.

"There was a young captain in the next

"SHE PLACED A SMALL HAND LIGHTLY ON HIS MOUTH FOR A MOMENT. IT WAS PLEASANT."

room asking for you, Doctor," said the little nurse; "a dear dark lad in pink silk, named Savage. I will follow you as soon as I have turned this old gentleman's pillow."

When the M.O. had gone out reluctantly, with many backward looks, the little nurse busied herself about her sweet tasks.

"I am not an old gentleman," said the Colonel, with a hint of passion in his remonstrance.

"Certainly not," said the little girl; "you are a darling!" She bent over him. "Please," she whispered, "where is it? You spoilt the set."

"It is next my heart!" said the Colonel.

With little shrieks she denuded him of his responsibility, and tucked it quickly up her sleeve.

"You will never tell anyone *at all*, dear?" she begged.

"On the word of a soldier and a gentleman," cried the Colonel, "*no!*"

How her eyes danced!

"But are you Miss Weston or 'D. L.'?" asked the Colonel.

"I am Miss Weston," she replied; "but let me whisper." Always willing to give pleasure, she put her nice little pink lips to the Colonel's ear. "But I am going to be 'D. L.', only he knows nothing about it. I began to make my trousseau directly after the first time I met him in a lane quite near your own house. Yes, I am going to be 'D. L.', but he knows nothing about it yet."

"D—D—Dora Lawly?" cried the Colonel, light breaking.

"You do not suppose I came here by accident, dear?" said the little girl. "I have had to sharpen my wits on such a lot of great big, terrible, clever people. Poor little me!"

She went away like a daisy shaken by a wind of laughter.

She met the M.O. in the corridor with the light of an awful purpose in his eye.

"For the first time in my life," he exclaimed, "I must act without premeditation. I fear what I am going to ask you will be a great surprise to you, but if you knew all you would understand my precipitation. Will you—well, we needn't talk of *marrying* yet; that is a far step; but will you be engaged to me? I would have deliberated very carefully over the question, had not events——"

"If it isn't one event," murmured the little girl, dimpling, "it would be t'other."

Round the corner tripped two women.

They were Mrs. Johnson-Biggs and the Comtesse.

"Miss Weston!" said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, pausing.

"The future Mrs. Lawly, madam," replied the M.O., taking cover like a bird.

Now, saving-face is an art which tests breeding. Mrs. Johnson-Biggs had breeding. She was one of the Warwickshire Podges.

"'MISS WESTON!' SAID MRS. JOHNSON-BIGGS, PAUSING."

She drew herself up; a reticent, kind, sad expression filled her eyes; she bowed in her own stately fashion to the young nurse, and observing, "May you be happy, Miss Weston!" motioned the M.O. aside.

She looked into his eyes, sorrowful, dignified, with a nobility worthy of her family.

"My poor boy," she murmured, "an old entanglement? You are honourable; you are splendid. Do not think I don't understand. So be it. Trust me. I will never tell her. Our secret is safe with me."

She passed in with a wonderfully quick movement to the Colonel's room, where the Comtesse was already sitting by the bedside.

"Comtesse," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, in a freezing voice, "you usurp my place."

"B-b-but, *ma chérie*——" the Comtesse began.

"It is over," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs; "I could not bring myself to do it. That is enough. It is over. Here I am, Henry; you will not lose me."

Here she perceived the unshaded clarity of his blue pyjama coat.

"Where is it?" she said.

The Colonel replied: "Gone. I have—have flung it away, Alice. The orderly has burnt it. The indiscretion is over, my love, and——"

A short scream sounded beside him. It was the Comtesse, who had risen to her feet.

"I have never been so insulted in my life!" she exclaimed. "That my gift—*mine*—Hélene de Clareté——"

The Colonel looked her full in the eye.

"Make your farewells," said Mrs. Johnson-Biggs, walking very magnanimously to the window, where she presented her imposing back to the room.

The Colonel held out the hand of a soldier and a gentleman.

"Comtesse," said he, "no one save those who have been immediately concerned will ever know of your kind gift by the haystack at the deserted farm."

"Nor—nor," whispered the Comtesse, "will you ever tell anyone at all that the gift was not mine? Your wife shall never know that?"

The air was electric with everybody's secrets.

The Colonel may have closed one eye for the hundredth part of a second.

"On your sweet life, *no!*" said he.

The Fine Art of Escaping.

HAS IT DECLINED?

By TIGHE HOPKINS.

Illustrated by Henry Evison.

In view of the number of recent escapes from prisoners' war-camps, the following article on the art of escaping will be found extremely interesting and timely.

TENS of thousands of prisoners, here, in France, in Russia, in Germany, and elsewhere; and few recorded escapes of real note. Has the art of prison-breaking failed? This art, it can be shown, is in its way a very fine one indeed, with an ancient and romantic history. Has it failed in the Great War? The suggestion has been made. If, therefore, in the course of a struggle under new and severer conditions, we have even a small number of flights of high daring and ingenuity, we shall be entitled to say that the art of the prison-breaker has not collapsed.

How much do we know as yet? Better things may have happened than we are aware of. For here comes a point to be steadily remembered. It is not while a war is in progress that we shall learn the true romance of the escapes that it brings forth. There is an etiquette in the matter. Nay, much more than etiquette, there is a code of honour. Suppose that I, as a prisoner of war, break my snares and get clear. I must not, while the war lasts, say too much about it. I have left comrades behind whose case my revelations may make harder.

Now, since the war began, we have had some interesting accounts of authentic escapes on our side, and with these I shall presently deal. I here, however, venture the surmise that the authors of these accounts have not yet bestowed on us their best. What may be by and by unfolded may—and I doubt not will—enhance their prowess. There are "pippins and cheese to come." Again, we have hitherto received none but the scantiest tidings of flights from camp or fortress on the part of the Allies.

Let us cast a glance backwards. By the various nations engaged in the immeasurable conflict extending between 1793 and Waterloo, hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war were held in captivity (many of them for years); but the records of authentic escapes of highest interest would by no means fill a shelf of a well-stocked library. The number of French soldiers incarcerated in Britain (at Norman Cross, Dartmoor, Chatham, Edinburgh, Yarmouth, and elsewhere) varied during the war from twenty thousand to nearly seventy thousand.

At Norman Cross, in Huntingdonshire, is spread out to-day a scene of forty acres of quiet pasture-land, where for a hundred years the ploughman has steered his plough. It is the site of our first real prison of war. To-day, a few yards of faded wall excepted, not a trace remains of the life of a century past.

The history of this most curious little world has been charmingly told by Dr. T. J. Walker. I do not fail to remark that in a work of some three hundred and fifty pages he devotes but ten to the subject of escapes. Yet the Norman Cross prison was standing for eighteen years, and during the whole of this period the population did not fall below several thousands. Among the French prisoners were hardy fighters who had engaged in many battles, yet not a single attested escape from this place has taken rank with the historic flights.

From one of the most romantic incidents discovered by Dr. Walker I shall quote, as an illustration of the extraordinary part so often played by women in these ventures:—

"Five hundred prisoners were confined in a building on Golden Hill, near Pembroke, and, as was the custom, they were allowed to eke out the very meagre allowance voted for their subsistence by the sale of toys, which they carved out of wood and bone. Two Pembroke lasses were employed in bringing the odds and ends requisite for this work, and in carrying away refuse from the prison. These girls, not having the law of nations or the high policy of Europe before their eyes, dared to fall in love with two of the Frenchmen, and formed a desperate resolve not only to rescue their lovers, but the whole of the prisoners in the same ward, one hundred in number. It was impossible to smuggle any tools into the prison, but a shin of horse beef seemed harmless even in the eyes of a Pembroke Cerberus. With the bone extracted from this delicacy the Frenchmen undermined

the walls, the faithful girls carrying off the soil in their refuse buckets. When the subway was complete, the lasses watched until some vessel should arrive. At length a sloop came in loaded with a consignment of culm for Stackpole. That night the liberated men made their way down to the water, seized the sloop, and bound the crew hand and foot, but unfortunately the vessel was high and dry, and it was found impossible to get her off. Alongside was a small yacht belonging to Lord Cawdor, which they managed to launch. This would not take them all; but the two women and twenty-five men got on board, taking with them the compass, water casks, and provisions from the sloop."

Next morning, of course, the hunt was up. A Dr. Mandsell had the whole county plastered with handbills, offering five hundred guineas for the recovery of the two girls, "alive or dead." They were never taken. The Frenchmen seized a sloop laden with corn, and, abandoning the yacht, compelled the crew to carry them to France. "When they were safe, it is pleasant to read that the commissary and engineer married the girls. During the short peace, the engineer and his wife returned to Pembroke and told their story; they then went to Merthyr and obtained employment in the mines, but on the renewal of hostilities went back to France, where it is to be hoped they lived very happily ever afterwards."

I turn to Dartmoor, the second war-prison built in England, and for many years now our principal convict station in the West Country.

Dartmoor was a depot for prisoners of war during the seven years that embrace our struggle with America. Like Norman Cross, it was a complete (and overcrowded) little city where no women were. It framed its own laws, had its schools, manufactures, arts; its workshops where coin was counterfeited and Bank of England notes were forged.

Very soon after the first batch of French prisoners had been received (in May, 1809), no fewer than five thousand were assembled within the double ring of masonry, and it is surprising to note how quickly and how well they settled down. The money of those who had remittances circulated freely; a market was held in the prison every morning except Sunday; the country people brought in produce of all sorts, and enterprising prisoners set up booths of their own. Gaming-tables were opened, and gambling became one of the most paralyzing vices of the place. Many trades were industriously pursued, and some of the politer callings. Fencing, dancing, and deportment were taught; and I find mention of a theatre, where plays were acted with accessories simpler than those of Molière and his troupe.

In 1813 the American prisoners of war began to arrive, and their numbers also rose to five thousand.

Mr. Basil Thomson, a former Governor, is our historian of Dartmoor; and his "Story of Dartmoor Prison," published some ten years ago, is both a faithful and a piquant piece of work. He had the archives to his hand, and capital use he made of them. Here again, however, I perceive that escapes are very sparsely scattered through his pages. Escapes from Dartmoor (though this prison also was for a long spell packed and overpacked) were neither more numerous nor more important than from Norman Cross.

But, as bearing on the variety and picturesqueness of the theme in general, we have a happy episode or two in Mr. Thomson's pages; and these that follow—with the glimpse they give us of the coaching era—are off the wonted track:—

"The first escape from the prison took place five days after the first draft arrived. Sevegran, a naval surgeon, and Auvray, a naval officer, having observed that a guard of fifty men marched into the prison every evening to assist in getting the prisoners into their respective halls, if required, made themselves glengarries and overcoats, and strips of tin looking like bayonets at a distance, and fell in at the rear of the detachment as it marched out. Favoured by the rain, which was falling heavily at the time, they passed all the gates unquestioned, and as the company wheeled towards the barracks they left it, and went on through the village towards Plymouth. Speaking English fluently, and being well provided with money, they had no difficulty in booking seats for London on the coach. In order to give them time, two of their friends had agreed that at the count-out next morning they should contrive to be the last to leave the prison. At the door they fell into a mock quarrel. Words ran high; the turnkey called two soldiers to help in keeping the peace; a crowd collected in expectation of a fight. With many a 'goddem,' the turnkey threatened them with the cachot, and in the disturbance, as was intended, he lost count. 'No matter,' said one of the prisoners, 'the count-out is a farce; no one could escape from this place without a balloon'; and the turnkey agreed, saying that it was the strongest prison in the world. The very next night the two conspirators, Kermel and Vasselin by name, with a third man, Cherabeau, attired in a like disguise, practised the same fraud. All went well until the third gate was reached, when the gatekeeper asked them whether the locking up was finished. Receiving no reply, he called after them insultingly, 'All these lobsters are deaf with their caps pulled down over their ears.' They, too, got safe to London."

Were I to travel from war to war, age by age, I could add little to the argument; for there is a kind of average of escapes, and it is never a large one.

In mid-October of the first year of the present war, we held German prisoners at Blackdown, Camberley, Dyffryn Aled (North Wales), Douglas (Isle of Man), Frimley, Handforth, Lofthouse Park (between Leeds and Wakefield), Newbury, Queensferry, Templemore (Ireland), York, and Olympia, in London. One concentration camp differs not greatly from another. The reader who has not seen an establishment of the kind will easily form a mental picture of the huge enclosure and its double line of barbed wiring,

with an extended space between, and the sentries, with fixed bayonets, pacing every yard of it. The barbed wires are strung taut, "like the strings of a harp." At intervals arc-lamps are fixed to keep the darkness at bay betwixt night and morning. Outside the commandant's office, on a high wooden platform, two sentries are on the look-out through the twenty-four hours. Similar platforms are erected at intervals all round the course, every point of which is commanded by sentinels.

On the civil side may be seen Germany in England as our society has viewed it in drawing-rooms, hotels, boarding-houses, restaurants, banks, warehouses, shops, and one knows not where else, from the period that dates within a few years of the Franco-German War. Here are clubmen whom we have known, men about town, persons who owned—until the outbreak of the war—estates in the country, teachers of languages and music, clerks and others down to domestics, whom the war in a few hours flung together as suspects into this or that enclosure in this or that part of the kingdom, within a space of time that enfolded memories of summer battles of oars at Henley and anticipations of the county championship in cricket.

"THE DUTCH SAILORS ON THE 'BATAVIER,' POINTING TO THE BOX, CALLED OUT IN BROKEN ENGLISH, 'MAN IN BOX; MAN IN BOX!'"

But in the happiest or easiest of circumstances there are prisoners of war who decline to accept their fate; and it is to the restive souls we turn for contributions to the story of escapes. What have the captive Germans in England done? Of what may be described as the larger order of episodes I find not more than two.

The first of these refers us to an early month of the war. On December 12th, 1914, the mere mishandling of a big package by a Gravesend porter brought to grief the bold and painful attempt of a young German officer. Lieutenant Otto Koehn (whether of the German army or the German mercantile marine), standing six feet one inch and weighing, it is said, about twelve stone, was in America when the war broke out. He started for Germany on board the steamer *Potsdam*, which was taken by a British ship and brought as a prize of war to Falmouth. Lieutenant Koehn, with a number of other Germans, was sent to Dorchester.

From Dorchester, shortly afterwards, some elderly aliens were to be conveyed by boat to Rotterdam, whence they could enter Germany. Koehn resolved to be of the party, and to travel as "Safety Matches—Non-Poisonous." There can be little doubt that the attempted escape was the outcome of a very clever plot arranged by young Koehn and his fellow-prisoners at Dorchester camp. They procured, by some means, a big packing-case which had contained Swedish matches. Strong brass hinges, hasps, and a padlock were fixed on it, and to the inner sides of the box were fastened arm-rests and cushions. There were also cocoa, bananas, and other food sufficient for a short journey.

How the officer got into the box has never been known. He gallantly declared, when arrested, that he had done everything by himself: put himself in, locked himself up. He could not possibly have done all this unaided, but he naturally reserves his story for a safer day.

Once inside his box, the getting away of the fugitive was easy enough. He simply travelled as part of the baggage of the elderly aliens, who went by a military train, under armed escort, direct from Dorchester to Tilbury. At Tilbury the box was put on board the ferry-boat *Catherine*, to await the arrival of the *Batavier II.*, bound for Rotterdam, which was on its way from the Custom House Quay.

"The case was a heavy one," says a writer in the *Chronicle*, "and the porters found the easiest way to handle it was to roll it over and over on the deck. By this means it was moved along the whole length of the boat to the *Batavier II.*, now lying alongside.

"The rough handling proved the undoing of the German plotter. Suddenly those on deck were surprised to see the arm of a man protruding through a hole in the lid of the case. The Dutch sailors on the *Batavier* excitedly approached Captain Jewiss, of the *Catherine*, and, pointing to the box, called out in broken English, 'Man in

box; man in box!' Captain Jewiss at once wrenched off the lid of the box, and inside it discovered a man lying huddled up in a semi-conscious condition."

Lieutenant Koehn had been coffined from twelve to fifteen hours, and in two minutes more he would have regained his liberty.

"From what has since been gathered," adds the *Chronicle* reporter, "it seems that Koehn was to have been liberated as soon as the Batavier liner had left the river, his companions being at hand to see that the box containing him was not stowed away in the hold, or anywhere where it would have been impossible for them to get at it."

At the Gravesend Police Station the battered officer is stated to have said: "I would rather be shot than undergo that ordeal again!"

This is in every way a good and thrilling deed, but Lieutenant Koehn should have had with him the waiting-maid of Grotius.

For this variant of Falstaff's buck-basket is occasionally met with in the history of escapes, and the supremely dramatic instance is that of Grotius—"the most illustrious of all Dutchmen," as Lord Acton calls him. In 1619, Grotius, involved in the ruin of Barneveldt, was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment and confined in the Castle of Louvenstein, near Gorcum. Two years later his wife, Marie de Reggesberg, who had been allowed to share her husband's captivity, smuggled him out of the fortress in a trunk in which he had received a supply of books. A clever maid-servant, privy to the design, was allowed to take charge of the precious freight, and had instructions to convey it to the house of friends in Gorcum. At the landing-place she steadily refused to let the trunk be placed with other luggage on a sledge, alleging that it was packed with very fragile articles. The trunk was thereupon lifted into a hand-barrow and wheeled in safety to the dwelling of David Dazelaer, a relative of Marie de Reggesberg. Some thirty-three years later, Cardinal de Retz, imprisoned in the Château of Nantes for his part in the troubles of the Fronde, had an idea of escaping in a trunk fastened to the back of one of the mules in the train of his friend M. de Brissac. Brissac assured him that he would be suffocated, and the Cardinal found another plan—and all but broke his neck in carrying it out.

The second of the two cases to which I referred is at present somewhat nebulous, but contains the elements of a choice conspiracy. Four German sailors, cutting the wires of the Isle of Man detention camp, slipped out under cover of the night. They were all young men (these are pre-eminently the kinds of actions wherein youth will be served), and one of the quartet spoke fluent English. The island was scoured from end to end, attention being specially given to the small creeks with which the whole coast is indented; but the seamen had fairly vanished.

Beyond the two important attempts that I have dealt with, some fifteen or twenty others have been reported. There has been tunnelling in one camp and another. Several German officers and private soldiers and sailors, at large for a few days and roaming the country, have either surrendered or been arrested. One officer, resigning himself to a policeman, said at his court-martial next morning: "It's impossible to escape from England." Here, as in every other theatre of the war, the plenary facts are still—and for a while will be—withheld from us; but it is possible, even though appearances seem to point to the contrary, that we keep a "more advised watch" in these days.

Although Army and Navy will ordinarily furnish the likeliest material for this ticklish and exacting game, two of the very best escapes on our side in the Great War have been accomplished by civilians. Young Mr. Bernard Watkins and Mr. Geoffrey Pyke have shown pluck, ingenuity, resourcefulness, and power of endurance; and both were more or less sick men when they gave their custodians the slip. Both also, I think, have some of their adventures in reserve for us; Mr. Pyke unquestionably has.

Mr. Bernard Watkins took his leave of the Austrians at the very commencement of the struggle, and his was the first flight to be achieved. From November, 1913, until the outbreak of hostilities he was living at Nachod, in Northern Bohemia, giving English lessons there and in the smaller towns adjacent. On August 5th, 1914 (war was declared at 11 p.m. on August 4th), returning from a professional visit to Neustadt, he was arrested in his rooms at Nachod, and told that he would be charged with spying. His diary, produced at the preliminary examination, proved the absurdity of the charge, but at Nachod police-station he was lodged and treated as a common criminal. From Nachod he was taken handcuffed to Aussig; from Aussig to Leitmeritz; and on foot thence to the neighbouring military town of Theresienstadt (any good war map will enable the reader to follow in Mr. Watkins's tracks), on the other side of the Elbe. On August 22nd he was marched, with other prisoners (not of war, apparently), "to a fortress about twenty minutes away." Fever raged around, and in the last week of September Mr. Watkins fell to it. "I was simply allowed to lie," he says, "until I should get better." He did get better towards the middle of October; and then, weak as he was, took an instant resolution to quit his fortress.

At half-past eleven on the morning of October 15th, while the prisoners were at their midday meal, Mr. Watkins told a sentry that he "wished to see if some clothes on the wall were dry." The sentry, an indifferent shepherd of prisoners, allowed him to pass out of sight.

"I strolled, hands in pockets, up to where the clothes were hanging. Now dodging behind buttresses and bushes to avoid being seen by the many sentinels, I made my way round the walls behind the infantrie-Haserne looking for a favourable spot to jump down from the wall. I arrived at last at a corner of the buttresses below which, on the outer side, lay a large pile of straw. The wall was about thirty feet high, but, as luck would have it, the branch of a tree stretched out over the wall just above this spot."

In view of the straw heap was another sentinel. It was, by the way, very like Mr. Winston Churchill's situation while waiting under the boundary wall of the Staats Model School. Crouching behind a bush until the sentry on his beat had passed within an archway, Mr. Watkins then seized the branch overhanging the wall, and in a moment the wall was behind him. He crashed down thirty feet—and was free.

He walked jauntily through Theresienstadt, as Mr. Churchill at one time and Captain Haldane at a later had walked through the main street of the enemy town of Pretoria. Reaching Bodenbach (after a night in the wet grass), he watched his opportunity at the railway station, dodged the ticket collector on the platform, and, entering an empty compartment of the one-forty-four for Dresden, locked himself into the lavatory. At Dresden "I got into the thickest part of the crowd around the gangway by the ticket collector. Coming to him, I pushed into his hand a thick piece of white paper, which I had cut into the shape of a ticket, and rushed down the steps." The American Consul and an English chaplain befriending him, Mr. Watkins, on October 19th, took an afternoon train for Leipzig. There he bought a ticket to Vandrup, "the first station over the frontier in Denmark for the Prussian through train. In sight of Woyens, the last German station before the frontier, he again fastened himself into the retiring room of an empty carriage. At Woyens "the train waited for about three-quarters of an hour while passports were examined, and though an official looked in through the window, he very fortunately did not see me." At this point Mr. Watkins, who seems never once to have lost his presence of mind, had passed the zone of danger. At Vandrup the Danish officials winked and smiled at his passport. He trained to Aarhus, and sailed thence for Hull.

"MR. WATKINS THEN SEIZED THE BRANCH OVERHANGING THE WALL, AND IN A MOMENT THE WALL WAS BEHIND HIM."

No sooner had the war begun than Mr. Geoffrey Pyke, in the interests of the *Daily Chronicle*, had the hardihood to undertake a mission to Germany. Thanks to his extreme proficiency in the language, he penetrated to the very heart of the empire, to Berlin itself. Here, however, in a few days he was arrested. In the cell of some common jail in the city he lay for sixteen weeks, until, by going to and fro in it for exercise, he had well-nigh tramped the soles off his boots. Without artificial light, without books or pen, he sat in gloom throughout the winter months from three-thirty in the afternoon until the following morning. Succumbing to blood-poisoning—a result of bad food—he could get no help from the doctor. At last he was transferred to Ruhleben. Here he contracted pneumonia and nearly died, and here again he received no medical aid.

Among three hundred fellow-prisoners (who "slept in one hayloft") Mr. Pyke made friends especially with Mr. Edward Falk, district officer of Nigeria, who, even before the opening of hostilities, had been arrested while holiday-making. Between them they framed a plan of escape, on which they were three months at work.

In his two narratives in the *Chronicle* (July 26th and 31st, 1915), Mr. Pyke properly refrains from telling exactly how the first step was taken. They bribed no one, he says, and wore no disguise.

"We escaped in broad daylight on the afternoon of July 9th, passing through a cordon of armed sentries and four tall barbed-wire fences. Spending the night in an adjoining sandpit, we entered Berlin the next morning, enjoying our first real good meal for months with huge relish flavoured by fear.

"Buying an outfit for a walking tour of the Harz Mountains, we trained to Bielefeld, where we alighted, and tramped the rest of the way by night across country with the aid of a luminous compass, passing over fields of barbed wire, through dense forest."

Their goal was the Dutch frontier, and the reader will understand without a glance at the map what a vast tract of hostile country was to be covered. Now parched by heat, now drenched

to the skin; eking out their little treasure of food with turnips, sugar beets, and potatoes culled from field and garden; hiding from patrols; narrowly escaping death one dark evening in a peat bog on a desolate moor—the adventurers toiled on thus through fourteen dreadful days and nights.

On a certain Friday "we made our position, by dead reckoning, to be about a mile from the Dutch boundary. Prepared for a last forward dash through the German sentry lines, we found ourselves surprised in our hiding-place by an armed guard.

"All seemed lost. We saw before us another prolonged period of terrible solitary confinement, when, to our joy and amazement, Dutch soldiers disclosed themselves. We hardly could believe our good fortune when they told us that we were fifty yards inside Dutch territory. They had taken us for smugglers.

"I shall never, however, forget the horror of our success. It will always remain imprinted on my mind — the vision of the soldier whom we believed to be German sitting like a cat watching a mouse."

They had thus passed the German double sentry line and not seen a single man.

At a village hard by they were treated with the greatest kindness by the officers of the Dutch border guard. On their arrival at Amsterdam the British Consul did the rest for them. I think that when the detail of this essay is known it may rank with the third great flight of Donat O'Brien, his excursion from the French fastness of Bitche to Trieste, in the autumn of 1808.

"THE VISION OF THE SOLDIER WHOM WE BELIEVED TO BE GERMAN."

It will always be pleasant to me to remember that I once had some repairs very skilfully executed in my house by a youth who afterwards broke from a prison camp in Germany, and, with three other audacious young Britishers, outwitted the whole military strength and espionage of Wilhelm II. My daughter remembers him as "the boy who ran upstairs three steps at a time." In July, 1914, Private (now Sergeant) Sydney Jaggers was a waiter at the Junior United Service Club. In the first days of August he was back with his regiment, the Queen's Royal West Surreys. On September 19th he left England for the Front. On October 31st, with sixty-six comrades, he was captured in the Battle of Ypres at Gheluvelt. On November 3rd he was in a prison camp in Mecklenburg, dining on swedes and water. On the night of November 15th, 1915, after thirteen months of grievous usage (he will one day, I hope, publish the diary he has shown me), he escaped. On November 19th he and his three companions crossed the border of a neutral country. He is now (as I write) in England, recruiting.

"For months," says Sergeant Jaggers, "I had been" (*Weekly Dispatch*, December 12th, 1915) "meditating escape. My rank was that of private, but as soon as I found out that I must be a corporal to be given any duties outside the barbed-wire entanglements—the only means of escape—I decided at the first opportunity to promote myself. Accordingly, when I was moved to another camp I managed to decorate myself with the necessary stripes, and, not being challenged, I became henceforth Corporal Jaggers.

"A plan of escape was settled between four of us, and as a preliminary to our plan we wore underneath our prison clothing the unstamped civilian clothing which we had kept hidden. I was employed at the guard cookhouse outside the barbed wire. In order that I should be allowed easily to pass I wore a distinctive badge with the name of the camp on it. I started work there at six-thirty in the morning, peeling potatoes, lighting fires, and cleaning up, and finished at three in the afternoon, when I returned to my tent."

On the night that Captain Haldane and his two friends put out for the veldt they were so weak from long confinement under the flooring of their bedroom that at first they could scarcely stand upright. Jaggers had been boxing for two months with a corporal, and was in the best fettle. A bad mistake was made in choosing for the start an evening of moonlight. This might well have cost them their lives at the rifles of sentries or patrols. Unlike Mr. Pyke and Mr. Falk (who had bought one in Berlin), they had no compass, nor, of course, any firearm.

Towards seven in the evening the stealthy move for liberty was made. Jaggers was the first to slip out. He went to the cookhouse, followed by a second man. To this man Jaggers had given his own badge, as he himself was unlikely to be challenged on the threshold of the camp. A third comrade "had the job of lighting the acetylene lamps outside the barbed wire which were used to light up the encampment. He lent his badge to our fourth man, a sergeant; so while I was able to take a mate out he was able to take a mate out,-the four of us representing the parties to the projected escape.

"The three of us made as if to go into the cookhouse, but instead of going into it we ran by and round the back. Meanwhile our mate, whose business was to light the lamps, had gone up to the guard and made out that he could not get them to light. We had arranged this excuse so that we should have a chance of getting across the field. When he thought that we had had sufficient time he lit the lamps, and himself made as if to go into the camp, but instead rushed away and joined us in some bushes at the side of the road."

"THEY NAVIGATED IT ON A FIVE-BARRED GATE CONVERTED INTO A RAFT."

If it were really done in this style, it is as daring as anything in the books. I do not question the word of my young friend the sergeant, but I know that on certain not unimportant points he still has something up his sleeve.

Under cover of the bushes the four brave lads shed the garb of prison, and stood up in civilian rig, ready for any fortune. One of the party was a sergeant with experience of Indian frontier life, and he led them by that fair North Star which has beaconed so many wanderers under so many skies. Running and walking, crossing icy marshes gingerly, by 6 a.m. they had done some twenty miles. In a spinney they rested until the dusk of the second day. They suffered hunger, but principally thirst. Their feet swelled, their joints ached, but the North Star shone above them, and in pain and suspense they pressed on. There were little rivers to wade through (on November nights), and there was one wide stream which defied them. They navigated it on a five-barred gate converted into a raft. Such are the pains, but such also is the romance of prison-breaking in the country of the enemy in war-time. I do not hesitate to class these escapes with the most intelligent and captivating of those of the Napoleonic campaigns.

Is the reader acquainted with ciphers or other kinds of secret writing? For military communications of importance the cipher has been in use since the days of the Cæsars. Napoleon's code traces to an Italian of the sixteenth century. Every soldier, since he is liable to fall a prisoner, should know a little of the art, though he need not study it as an expert of the War Office or the Foreign Office must do.

A young American lady, at a place in the region of war, the bright spirit of a tiny prisoners' aid committee, receives (through what channel may be discovered when the war is ended) the simple communication that follows:—

"Delighted to know you are recovered. I also am greatly better. Just going to take a stroll round the camp. This will be my first since I got up. One of our sergeants was apprenticed to a chemist in London, and doctors us finely. Shall I hear of you again?"

As the young American lady had not been ill, and knew that the anonymous officer was as fit as a boxer, she carried the letter to a trusty person who had some skill in ciphers. The trusty person, perceiving that the writer had chanced a rough and ready use of an imperfect knowledge of the Heidler method, extracted from it this secret message: "Take this to a chemist." Having chemistry of his own, he quickly brought the sympathetic ink to light, and on the back page of the letter this communication stood revealed:—

"THE THREE OF US ARE READY AND THE NIGHT IS FIXED. GET TWO FEMALE DISGUISES AND A PEASANT'S."

This letter has been in my hands. I have so completely travestied the facts that they could be brought home to nobody. I have done this for the reason that a brilliant design was frustrated, though I believe that one, at any rate, of the heroes is still at large. The story lies among those that wait upon events.

And here I shall take leave to insist that escape in this century, all circumstances considered, ought to be at least twice as difficult as it has been in any previous era. We have none the less some salient instances. The German attempts from Britain (two excepted) are of no high value; but in fairness we are to remember that flight from an island is not very easily compassed. On the whole showing, however, we have beaten the enemy hollow at the game. The best flights on our part will rank with the best in the Napoleonic wars; and the art of prison-breaking has not failed.

The INSURING of Mrs HARRIGAN

By JAMES FRANCIS DWYER.

Illustrated by Frank Wright.

IT was Fenwick's first trip in the employ of the Gotham and Glory Life Insurance Company. He had talked much, but business had not come his way. It requires an exceptionally good talker to interest a farmer in life insurance. Fenwick had just begun to realize this when he chanced to meet Maloney.

"It's no use wastin' yer breath on me," said that individual, "but I'll put you on to some good business."

Within Fenwick's breast hope flared up and made him gasp. "Where?" he cried.

"Turn up by the lake and walk along by the pine woods till you strike Harrigan's place. Harrigan takes out a policy with every insurance man that comes his way."

Harrigan was sitting before his open door when the insurance agent approached. The farmer was a thin, consumptive-looking man, with the weary look of the confirmed pessimist. Fenwick summed him up as an easy victim, and with much confidence he unloosed his opening speech.

Harrigan listened patiently. "Is it the biggest and best company in the world?" he asked, languidly.

"Certainly," cried Fenwick. "We have one hundred and eleven millions in reserve. We paid out nearly twenty millions in claims last year. No humbugging with our society, sir. No trouble for the unfortunate widows and orphans." He unlocked his bag and pulled out a mass of insurance literature. "And the rates, Mr. Harrigan! Now, what will be your age at your next birthday?"

The farmer went on carving a piece of pine, and contemplated the little pile of chips.

"It wasn't myself I was thinking of," he said, dreamily.

"Wife, sir?" queried Fenwick, briskly, sorting out his forms with nervous fingers. "What age is she, sir?"

Harrigan stood up and turned towards the door of the shack. "Come inside and we'll talk it over," he said.

The agent was jubilant. His fat face glowed with delight. His heart throbbed mightily as visions of a rich commission floated before his mind.

Harrigan motioned him to a broken-backed chair near the fireplace, while he perched himself on a stool between his visitor and the door. The farmer seemed to be pondering over some problem, and Fenwick, seeing that he was not listening to the remarks about the benefits of life insurance, stopped talking and waited for him to speak.

After a few minutes' silence, Harrigan drew his stool closer and leaned forward.

"Wish you had turned up last week," he murmured.

"Better late than never," said Fenwick. "I'm in time if your good lady is——"

"That's just it," interrupted Harrigan, moodily; "*she's dead.*"

The agent's backbone seemed to lose its stiffening force, and his body sagged. The information startled him.

"I—I thought you wanted to insure her," he stammered.

"So I do," said Harrigan, quietly.

Fenwick tried to smile, but fear smoothed out the wrinkles that mirth tried to create, and left his face white and ghastly.

"But—but you cannot insure her," he spluttered; "it's impossible."

Harrigan reached forward and tapped him hard with a bony forefinger. "No one knows she's dead," he whispered.

The agent's throat became suddenly parched, and he breathed painfully. The weird song of the pines increased in volume.

Again the farmer leaned forward and tapped him impressively. A toil-battered hand pointed to a long box in the corner, and Fenwick shivered.

"She's in that," he murmured; "and I

want you to insure her for two hundred pounds. Wait a moment and I'll show her to you."

The limp and perspiring agent glanced towards the door, but Harrigan read his thoughts. He reached forward and grasped Fenwick by the collar, and then, stooping down, kicked the lid off the long box. A figure wrapped in canvas lay inside it.

"Good Lord!" shrieked the insurance man. "Wha—what happened to her?"

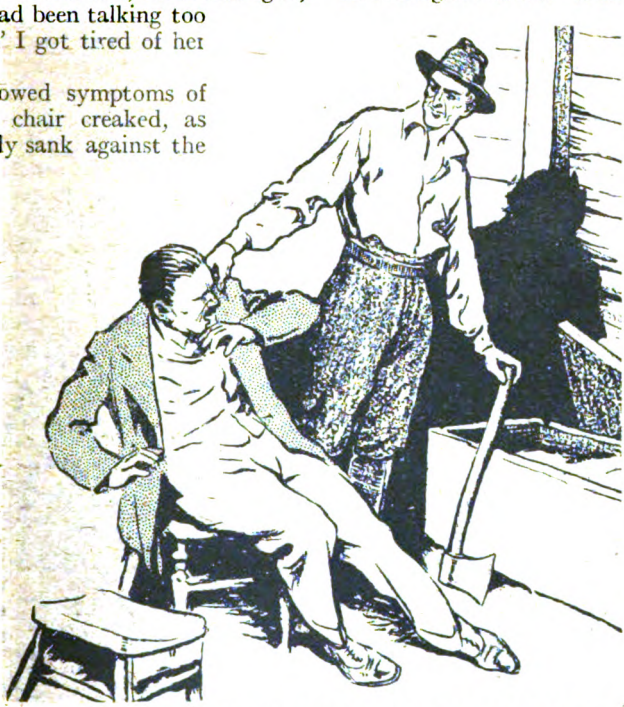
"I killed her with this axe," said Harrigan, calmly. "She had been talking too much of late, an' I got tired of her tongue."

The agent showed symptoms of apoplexy. The chair creaked, as his spineless body sank against the broken back.

"Come on, wake up," cried Harrigan, irritably. "Get out your forms and your pen and ink, and we'll insure her. I'll give you fifty pounds out of the deal when I get their cheque."

He let the head of the axe fall noisily upon the floor, and the agent came to life again.

"Yes, sir; oh, yes, sir, I will," he stammered. "Thousand-pound policy? Yes, sir, certainly."



"'I KILLED HER WITH THIS AXE,' SAID HARRIGAN, CALMLY."

Harrigan juggled playfully with the axe, and the fountain-pen travelled at full speed across the printed forms.

"Wha—what name, sir?" gasped Fenwick. "What is—er—what was the lady's name?"

"Mary Ann Harrigan, maiden name O'Brien," answered the farmer.

"Ah, yes. Ann Harrigan Mary, maiden name O'Ryan," mumbled the nervous agent. "Wha—what age will she be next birthday?"

Harrigan looked puzzled. He balanced the axe in his hand, and contemplated the ceiling.

"Guess she won't have one," he said, slowly.

Fenwick stopped writing. "We must put in what age she—she will be next b—b—birthday," he gurgled.

"Very good," said Harrigan. "I'll see what age she was last birthday. It's entered in this Bible."

He moved across the room to consult the worn volume that lay upon the mantel-shelf, and the agent saw an opportunity to escape. With a bound he fled at top speed, leaving proposal forms, fountain-pen, and hand-bag on Harrigan's table. A shout came down the wind, and a stone whizzed past him, and his short legs ate up the dusty road at a terrific gait.

An hour afterwards, Fenwick, with clothes all torn and splashed, breathlessly related the story of the murder of Mrs. Harrigan to the policeman in the nearest town, and when he had finished the officer propped himself against a lamp-post and laughed till the tears raced down his cheeks.

"Have ye run all the way?" asked the Law.

Fenwick snapped out an affirmative. The other's mirth annoyed him.

"Well, that's a confounded shame," grinned the officer. "You're a fat man, and you may be troubled with heart disease. I'll have to be speaking to Harrigan, or he'll be killing one of you fellers yet. You're the sixth insurance man that he has played the trick on this last month. That's a dummy stuffed with wool that he has in the box. He never had a wife, to my knowledge, and I've been round here this twenty years."

And again the Law propped itself against the lamp-post to ease the merriment bubbling within, while the representative of the Gotham and Glory Life Insurance Company hurried down the street.

SIR HERBERT TREE

Stories About Him: By PERCY BURTON

(*Late Manager for Sir Herbert Tree*).

Illustrated by C. E. Brock.

WHEN I saw Sir Herbert Tree off to Europe on a Spanish boat a short while ago, I never expected to see him again. Even a cable of greeting from him on his arrival at Cadiz did not altogether reassure me. He always took life too strenuously and wanted to live every moment of the time. He had little repose and less concentration. "To everyone is vouched only a limited amount of concentration," he said. Life was a comedy to Tree, in which he always wanted to play the leading part.

Tree claimed that acting was on a level with oratory. "To impinge yourself on your audience is essential in acting," he contended. "It is the same with the orator; as Gladstone said, 'The work of the orator is cast in the mould offered by the mind of his hearers. It is an influence principally received from his audience (so to speak) in vapour, which he pours back upon them in flood.'"

"THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN IRVING AND DISRAELI."

"Swinburne said to me once," Sir Herbert said, "that his greatest ambition was to write a good play, but he knew that he couldn't. The literary artist's work is to cover so many pages of white paper with so much black ink, and for that he gets his reward. The dramatic artist's task is exactly the opposite. He gets his effects, not by elaboration, but by throwing away, by expulsion, by epitomizing a situation in a word, a gesture, a glance. Naturally, it is somewhat disconcerting to a literary artist to find that the dramatic artist is forced to tear up his literary efforts."

Tree considered it but natural that the classic drama, in common with all other arts, should be in abeyance during the war. "Art," he expressed it, "cannot flourish in blood. It is essentially a pastime of peace. It can only flourish in repose." Light comedy and revues held sway because "We try to forget the horrors of the day in the frivolities of the night. Shakespeare is, for the time being, under a war cloud. Nor is one curious as to serious music or pictorial art, or the art of the sculptor. What occupations would there be today for Benvenuto Cellini but to chase designs on explosive shells?"

Tree loved an epigram more than he did money and cultivated his facility and felicity in this direction. He spoke of "the luxury of scorn," and once said, "Out of our large scorn we weave our little epigrams." These were varied both in merit and style, according to circumstance, and often patterned after Oscar Wilde, whom he knew well. In fact, Tree knew everybody who was anybody (he made a point of it), and everybody who was anybody knew Tree. He saw to that. But

he was a very generous host, and nothing pleased him better than to entertain, and on the grand scale he loved to do everything. To Tree wine was "a mental bath," and he was never tired of the description of the man who had gone away on an "alcoholiday."

One of his favourite little pen-and-ink sketches was one showing the resemblance between Irving and Disraeli, and though he had a great admiration for the latter, Tree had been too often the victim of the former's vitriolic wit and too close a rival to like Irving. In latter days, however, Tree was inclined to be a little more generous to his own predecessor, and was almost persuaded to admit that Henry Irving was a great man, if not a great actor. Tree's favourite story of Irving was how they had been boon-companions one night, and the latter had been indulging all too freely in a "mental bath," with the result that Tree had great difficulty in getting him to his London apartments in Stratton Street, whither he took him in a cab. Irving, according to Tree, was too far gone to do more than adjure him to "Hold up the oriflamme, my boy! Hold up the oriflamme!" at infrequent intervals, but at last he got him home. The next day Tree said that Irving, in discussing him with a friend, had said, "H'm, yes, nice chap, Tree. Pity he drinks!" And, in discussing anybody with Sir Herbert, I was sure of getting an appreciative laugh if I said, in an Irvingesque way, "Pity he drinks!"

Tree, however, never forgave Irving for some very caustic remarks and some more caustic silences in regard to his performances. Once, after a long absence, Irving had been to see Tree act in a play in which an actor, the late Charles Allan, was playing the small part of a servant, and on his opinion being asked subsequently about the performance in general and perhaps Tree's in particular, Irving had said, "Yes, very interesting—Allan immense."

On another occasion Irving had been persuaded to see Tree's production of Stephen Phillips' "Herod," in which there was only one scene (of great magnificence), with wonderful steps leading up to the palace; and Irving's only comment on the production or performance at its close was, "What magnificent steps! What magnificent steps!"

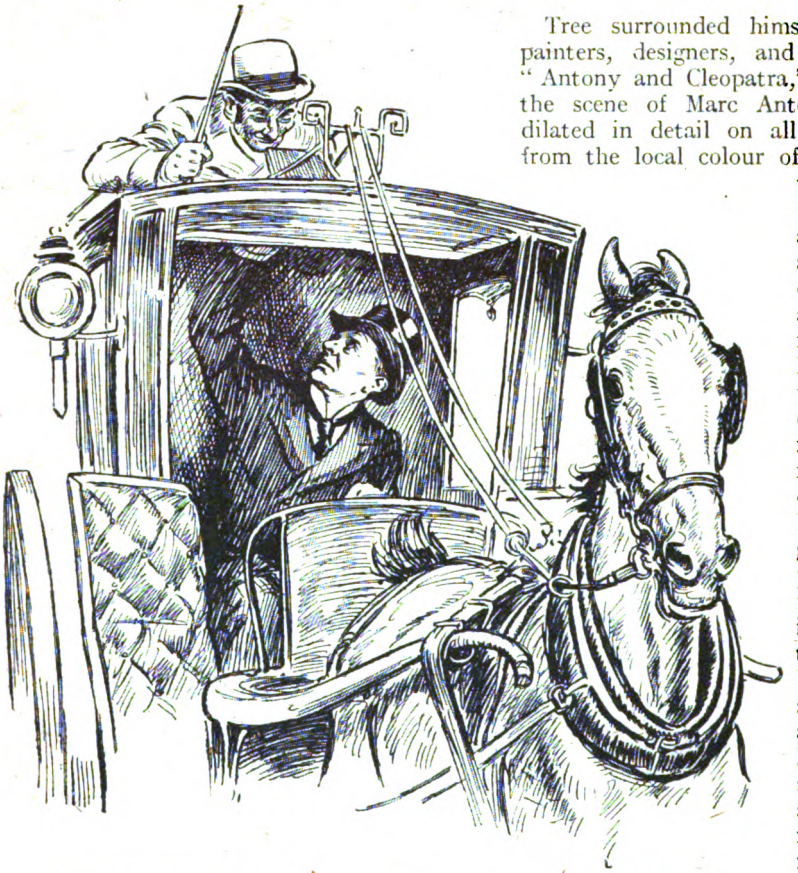
But Tree was fond of telling a good story against himself, if it were not too good—or bad. He would recall the late W. S. Gilbert saying, when he came off in a certain play of his, very hot and perspiring freely, and asked how he acted. "Well, Tree, your *skin* acts well!" Or when Tree asked Gilbert if he would be able to grow a moustache before he could play another part, the latter said, "Oh, yes, Tree, you will be able to grow a *large* moustache before you are able to play this part." But I never heard Tree tell W. S. Gilbert's reply, when asked how he liked Tree's Hamlet, to wit, that it was "funny without being vulgar!"—a remark which emanated from Gilbert Hare, at a luncheon where W. S. Gilbert was present, and liked the criticism so much that he appropriated it.

Tree loved to give away his books and loved to see them being read, even by ambitious and artful members of his company. He loved to hear them praised, for he had serious ambitions as a writer, and would always agree as to their often extolled qualities. But, egotism notwithstanding (and Sir Herbert treasured greatly a golden egg-cup given him recently by his daughter, Iris, inscribed, "For the Eg(g)otist"), Tree became more and more lonely, and hated above all things to be alone. "Don't leave me! Don't leave me!" Sir Herbert would reiterate, even last thing at night, as though he feared to be by himself. And one could almost believe the old story of Tree, driving through a London park in a hansom, putting his hand up through the aperture and saying, "Cabby, come and sit inside with me—I feel so lonely."

Sir Herbert said to me more than once, "I hate people with tact—people going about always pretending to be something else than what they really are."

Tree was as ubiquitous as he was restless, and would sometimes have a taxi waiting for him all day, and often two or three turned up at night. I have frequently known him to come to the theatre for the *matinée* and forget to pay or discharge the chauffeur, at the end of the performance going out at the front of the theatre and finding the taxi still waiting for him at night. This happened both at the New Amsterdam in New York and at Brooklyn, when he played there. Generally, he had no money about his person to pay them or even for a gratuity. To the prompter or stage-manager who said, "You don't know your lines, Sir Herbert," he replied, "Oh, yes, I do, several of them."

Tree loved flowers and women alike, and would have liked to play Tennyson's "Becket" (which Irving did), and re-echoed the poetical saying of that monk, "Men are God's trees,



"CABBY, COME AND SIT INSIDE WITH ME—I FEEL SO LONELY."

and women are God's flowers." I remember how particular he was in choosing the best and most beautiful flowers to take to Mme. Bernhardt when she lay seriously ill at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York and was about to be operated on. We drove from one florist to another on Fifth Avenue, as we couldn't get what he considered suitable, and at last had them tied in ribbon of the tricolour as a compliment to Bernhardt. I accompanied him to the hospital, and she expressed a wish to see him. He "found her full of vitality, courage, and enthusiasm." He asked her if he might give the public a message as he was to address an audience (at the close of his own performance) at a concert in the Metropolitan Opera House for the benefit of the mutilated soldiers of the Allies. With a fine gesture, Bernhardt said: "Tell them"—and then she kissed him on the cheek. At the close of the concert, Tree respectfully threw to the audience "the kiss of the greatest woman I have ever known."

Tree surrounded himself with the best painters, designers, and archæologists. In "Antony and Cleopatra," while elaborating the scene of Marc Antony's return, Tree dilated in detail on all that he required, from the local colour of the desert to the purple awning over Cleopatra's throne, and then turned his attention to the crowd in general and Cleopatra's retinue in particular. He thought it appropriate that the queen should be surrounded by four or five (or was it six?) of her and Antony's little children grouped round Cleopatra to greet the return of their father, in whose absence they had presumably been born. But the susceptible respectabilities of Tree's leading lady were shocked at such a suggestion, and she refused to be surrounded by a group of natural offspring, which she claimed was "indecent," to Tree's bewilderment and dismay. He argued and re-argued, and "tre-argued" (as he put it) in vain, but with the ultimate result that his leading lady at last consented to being accompanied by a couple of tots, a little boy and girl, one on each side of her, to Tree's apparent and expressed relief. "Life," he said, "is full of compromises!"

Tree's absent-mindedness and abstraction were proverbial. One day he took a cab and gave the driver the address to go to. Throughout the journey he was reading letters, and when the house was reached alighted, still reading, and knocked at the door. The servant who opened it was startled by the inquiry, "Well, what do you want?" And, disturbed in his reverie, Sir Herbert said to the still-amazed servant, "Come in, come in," as he walked back to the cab and drove away.

Another time Tree was endeavouring to get a well-known actor (the late Lewis Waller) back to his fold, and received him in his

dressing-room as he was making up. "How much would you want to come back to me?" inquired Tree, as he fondled the grease-paint and passed it lightly over his sphinx-like face. Waller named an exorbitant figure, to which Tree merely replied, as he went on making up, "Don't bang the door as you go out, will you?"

The late James Welch, another clever actor, told me of his experiences with Tree. "He sent for me and said he had a great scheme of producing the Stevenson version of 'Robert Macaire,' and wanted me to play Jacques Strop. I was delighted. 'I don't, however, intend doing it just yet,' he said, and my spirits fell. More still, when I found myself playing an Egyptian slave-driver in 'Hypatia,' with eight lines, a beard of black sausages, and three pounds a week, while I had to decline another offer of more than three times as much."

But the tables were turned on Tree by a young lady at an elocution contest who, after doing her bit, came up to the table where Tree was sitting in judgment with Forbes-Robertson and other examiners, and said: "I hope you'll pass me, Sir Herbert, because, if you don't, I sha'n't love you!"

Like all prominent actors and especially managers, Sir Herbert Tree was the recipient of many strange letters of all kinds, but particularly, of course, from those desirous of going on the stage. The writer of one was a house decorator by trade, but wrote that, as circumstances over which he had no control had recently subjected him to epileptic fits, he would be glad to take a part in Tree's next production. He added that he had a strong taste for the literary drama, of which indeed he had several samples on hand, and concluded his letter thus: "To prove to you that I am not lacking in dramatic instinct, I enclose a newspaper cutting, which please return." Underlined in red ink were the words: "The prisoner, who denied the assault, conducted his own case, and defended himself in a somewhat dramatic manner."

Still another ran: "Dear Mr. Tree,—I hear you want dark people for your 'Antony and Cleopatra.' I should like to come to you. I am a Mohammedan. I have great dramatic talent.—Yours truly, SARDONAPALUS. P.S.—I can lift any grand piano with my teeth."

Tree dearly loved a joke, even on the stage. He was once appearing as "Othello," and his Brabantio was being played by "an old actor of the old and furious school, who was no better than he ought to be, and strangely uncertain in his movements as well as in the words of his part." He had reached the well-known injunction to Othello:—

> Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
> She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee,

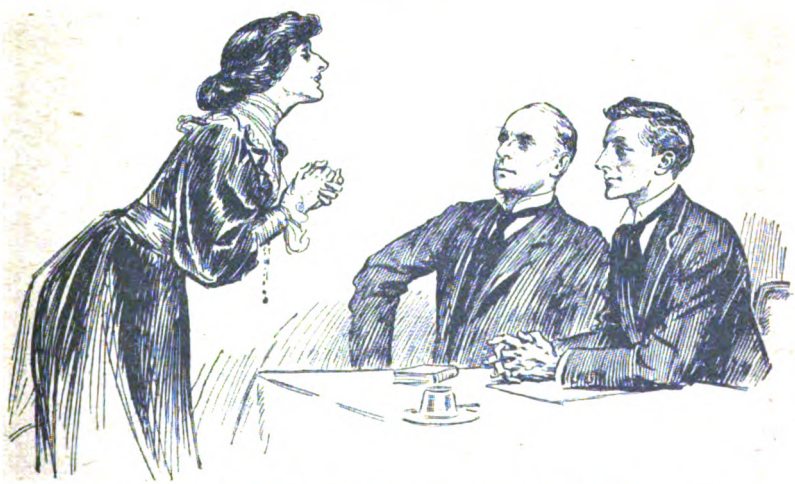
which he stuttered forth thus:—

> Look after her, Othello, keep your eye on her,
> She has made a fool of her father, and may do the same to you.

He staggered off the stage and, weeping bitterly, fell into the arms of an actor. "Young man," he said, "let this be a lesson to you. I have been on the stage forty-five years, and this is the first time I have ever suffered from stage-fright."

Tree was always a bad first-nighter, and sometimes did not know his lines, but, when he did and got used to them, soon grew tired of the part.

After "The Eternal City," by Hall Caine, had been running some time, Miss Constance



"I HOPE YOU'LL PASS ME, SIR HERBERT, BECAUSE, IF YOU DON'T, I SHA'N'T LOVE YOU!"

Collier told me that Tree, who played Baron Bonelli, one night made his appearance at each cue with a portmanteau which he deposited in a corner and at every exit took it away with him, to the amusement of the other actors in the scene. When rehearsing the same play, the author was anxious to get a particularly striking and even violent effect in the scene between the hero and the heroine when he found that she had been unfaithful to him, and proposed that Robert Taber should throw Miss Collier over his shoulder. "That reminds me, Caine," said Tree, seriously, "of a scene I once saw in which the hero caught hold of the heroine and banged her head on the floor." "Fine," said Hall Caine; "what play was that?" "'Punch and Judy,' I think it was," said Tree, as he calmly proceeded with the rehearsal.

When playing Fagin in "Oliver Twist," Tree appeared in the usual rags except for his feet, which were shod in spotless patent-leather shoes, which, he explained in an undertone, were quite in keeping with the part, as Fagin had stolen them.

Tree told me of his experiences with George Bernard Shaw, who would write him long critical letters which Tree would be careful to read and keep by him, but would come to rehearsal and pretend he had not had a chance to do so, to Shaw's annoyance. At one rehearsal of Shaw's "Pygmalion," Tree and the author were in heated discussion as to whether Professor Higgins was really in love with Eliza Doolittle, the character played by Mrs. Patrick Campbell, when the latter interrupted the discussion by the remark, "What do you know about love, Shaw? One of these days you will eat a good big mutton-chop, and then Heaven help all us women!"

Tree was at first averse to woman's suffrage, but told me that, since their splendid work during the war, he had changed his mind and had said so publicly in a speech he made the last time he was in England, while he was very proud that Asquith had praised him for his expression of opinion to this effect.

"WHEN PLAYING FAGIN TREE APPEARED IN THE USUAL RAGS EXCEPT FOR HIS FEET, WHICH WERE SHOD IN SPOTLESS PATENT-LEATHER SHOES."

Walking down the Haymarket one day shortly after the *Titanic* steamship disaster, Sir Herbert espied Ellen Terry's daughter, Miss Ailsa Craig, an ardent suffragist, just ahead of him. Going up behind her, he lightly tapped her on the shoulder, and said, "Boats for Women."

To revert to rehearsal, Tree was on the stage when there was a tremendous sound, like a thunderbolt or bomb, which frightened some of the ladies. "Oh, it's all right," said Tree; "it's only Bourchier's head."

Forty-Eight Hours.

By EDWARD CECIL.

Illustrated by Sterne Stevens.

APTAIN RICHARD TRAVERS looked at his watch.

He had a limited time at his disposal, a very limited time—forty-eight hours, between leaving his duty and being back at his duty. And eight of those hours had gone. He was now half-way across the Channel. The sun was shining brightly, the wind was blowing freshly, and he was going the right way, out of the anxiety, the noise, the roughness, the strain of constant danger, to that secure island, England. But in a very few hours he would be going the wrong way, back from security and something like normal life to all that may be included under that short but eloquent phrase—at the Front.

Well, he was lucky. Forty-eight hours' leave means much to any man. To him it might mean everything. *Might* mean. It depended on how he used his time. He had much to do—a delicate situation to handle. And he was compelled to handle it at that express speed which in such situations may be helpful, but may equally well be ruinous.

Captain Dick Travers was not a very young man. He had not that divine optimism of supreme youth which sometimes rides to victory totally unconscious of the difficulties in the way. He quite saw the forces against him. And, to be quite frank, they frightened him.

He was no coward in the ordinary sense. He was, indeed, a strong and brave man. But he was thirty-five, and when a man is thirty-five he has usually ceased to be a fool. He has begun to see that other people besides himself may have a reasonable point of view of their own. He has begun to realize that others have advantages which he lacks, even if he has advantages which they lack. There had been a time when Dick Travers was the most self-confident of young men. Dare-devil Dick he had been called in the hunting-field. There were times when he was still Dare-devil Dick. In the face of bodily danger he knew nothing except supreme contempt for that danger. His face was the face of a man who defies obstacles, laughs at them when he does not merely ignore them.

He stood now facing the Channel breeze, his cap in his hand. His bare head was a fine head, his jet-black hair, cropped short, still curled. An awkward man, you would say, to meet up against you in a tight corner. Yes; but if you understood the cloud of thought on his face, you would understand that though he stood there, erect and strong, facing the sea-breeze and loving it, pleased as he saw the land taking shape before him, he had good enough reason to be doubtful about bringing what he had to do to a successful conclusion in the short time at his disposal. Doubts, fears, hesitations! Who should have doubts, fears, and hesitations when he is out to win the woman he loves? Has faint heart ever won fair lady? Did the heroes of romance count the chances against them? Does any good soldier ever feel fear or waste time in feeling respect for the enemy when it comes to grips?

Well, this man, our hero, had learnt that Dare-devil Dick qualities were of mighty little account against Krupp artillery, and that however pretty it may sound to rush a girl off her feet into the arms of a hero, that sort of thing, though it may be pleasant to the girl at the moment, is not exactly fair to any girl, and *most girls nowadays know it.*

"But I've got to win her," said Dick Travers to himself. "I have just got to do it."

Well, he was a poor man against a rich man, and he knew that, however little worldly wealth may count in surroundings where every man holds his life in his hands and conditions are rough and hard, in England, and in London especially, worldly position had to be considered, worldly chances had to be weighed, and, if you could equally well love either, the rich man or the poor man, it would simply be romantic folly to throw over the rich man merely because he was rich.

"There is no indication," he reflected, grimly, "to show that she has any intention of throwing over Kennaway. All I've got to go upon is that she once distinctly refused *to be engaged to me!*"

But there was that letter he had in the breast-pocket of his tunic.

"If you want to have any chance of winning her, take what leave you can get at once, however short, and *act.*"

That was the advice of a friend. And "act" was underlined twice. Well, he had got his forty-eight hours' leave. He was going to act. But what exactly he was going to do he did not know.

And in that pocket-book in his breast-pocket,

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"THE CONVERSATION ON THE TELEPHONE WAS LIKE MOST TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS—TRUNCATED."

actually touching the letter from his friend Mannering, was a scrap of paper torn from a soldier's pocket-book—a dead man's pocket-book—which might help him. Would it? Would he remember it in the hurry and stress of his own affairs?

Millicent Bryant was in bed. She had just finished her early morning cup of tea. She was contemplating the business of the day. She had a rehearsal at eleven, a charitable garden-party, at which she was selling flowers, in the afternoon. Also she had a dinner engagement at the Cosmopolitan Hotel for the early hour of six-thirty. She had fixed it at that early hour to allow of her getting to the theatre in comfortable time to play her small but important part in the successful comedy "The Future Lady Manners," which had done so much towards making her name as an actress in the highest and most discriminating circles in her exacting profession.

She stretched her limbs and yawned. The day did not frighten her. She had the wine of youth in her veins. She enjoyed the excitement, the stir and movement of her life. She would have liked to rule out of her day's programme that dinner engagement. But she felt she could not do so. Possibly at the last moment the excuse of a headache might be urged, in view of her evening's work at the theatre. She would see.

Then she yawned again.

"Well, I suppose I shall be all right when I've had my bath."

She would be. She knew it. She was strong and well, though she worked hard. She was successful in her work. She had a future before her. She had nothing to complain about, really. But, if the truth must be told, she was more "satisfied" than "happy."

The sunlight streamed in through a chink between the window curtains. She saw it and smiled. The prospect of the day became a little more alluring. She turned to her letters.

At that moment her maid entered the room.

"You are wanted on the telephone, miss."

"Yes. Who is it?"

"Captain Travers, miss."

Her maid was watching her. She knew it. She could not know exactly all that the maid might know. But she shrewdly guessed that she probably knew pretty well all that there was to know. If a man has no secrets he can keep from his valet, how much more must a woman's secrets be in possession of her maid? Women are so uncommonly quick in ferreting out each other's secrets—especially if they be secrets which concern the heart. So, having twice yawned naturally, Millicent Bryant now yawned again purposely. But she could not help letting her letters slip from her hands.

"Draw the curtains back and let us have some sunlight," she said, quickly. "I will go to the 'phone."

The day had begun, and one of the most beautiful of our younger actresses stepped out of bed into the sunlight.

The conversation on the telephone was like

most telephone conversations, truncated. The 'phone is not an ideal medium for talk. It reduces conversation to *vox et præterea nihil*, and over it the human voice often becomes thin and attenuated, even into inaudibility. And even if it is not as bad as this, there is never any possibility for any of that by-play in conversation which gives meaning to quite ordinary words. The 'phone is useful, but not ideal for talk between two human beings. It eliminates their personalities. When, moreover, you are using an open telephone and know that your maid is not busy in your bedroom as she ought to be, but is probably hanging about somewhere where she can hear any scrap of what you say which her sharp ears can catch, you are apt to feel, as Millicent Bryant felt, some restraint upon your words.

"Is that you? Good morning."

"Good morning, Captain Travers."

This aloud to be heard.

"Why 'Captain Travers'?'

"The 'phone."

"Oh, that's a bit thin!'

"Well—Dick, if you like.'

This in a low voice, not to be overheard.

"What do you say?"

She repeated, still in a whisper.

"Thanks. That's better."

"Where are you? Am I through — to France?"

"No, to the Turkish Bath. I've just arrived in England—forty-eight hours—trenches to trenches."

"But you've time to get clean! How noble of you and how English!"

"I've no time for small talk, Millie. I want you to lunch with me."

"But I can't. I've a rehearsal this morning, a charitable garden-party this afternoon. I must rest in between. Come to the garden-party."

"You must."

"Must what?"

"Lunch with me.'

"I wish I could."

"I shall have to be on my way back this time to-morrow."

"So soon?"

"Yes. I've said so."

"What do you want to see me about? Can't you see me at the garden-party? I shall be doing nothing except smiling and getting fancy prices for pretty flowers."

"I must see you—by yourself."

"Is it so important as that?"

"Yes."

"Haven't you heard?" This in a low voice.

"What do you say?"

"Haven't you heard?"

"Heard what?"

Millicent was trembling. She hesitated. She wanted to tell—what would have to be told. But she could not do it. He had only a few brief hours. She could not bring herself to shatter the happiness of those few brief hours.

"Heard what?"

Even through the 'phone his voice was sharp. She prevaricated.

"That I have got engaged to play a part in the new Garvy play."

"No. What has that got to do with your lunching with me?"

"Only that it has made me extremely busy."

"How absurd of you!"

"How—absurd?"

"That you should have frightened me for nothing. Well, will you lunch with me?"

"The answer is in the affirmative."

But her voice was not very steady.

"In the what?"

"In the affirmative."

"Good! Then—Scott's at twelve-thirty."

"Yes."

"Repeat the time and the place."

"You are very peremptory."

"One gets into the habit. Out there in France—and now—there mustn't be any mistake."

She repeated.

"Right—twelve-thirty sharp."

She put up the receiver. It cannot be said whether she looked forward to her lunch. For a moment she did so wildly, gladly, tumultuously. Then she chilled. She had all her work cut out for her to keep her composure under the sharp eyes of her maid.

She succeeded, however, very well. She proceeded to dress carefully.

The most that her maid gleaned was made up from two contradictory symptoms. She had called him Captain Travers, and she was very particular about choosing what clothes to wear.

An exciting day had begun in real earnest for Millicent. It could not be an ordinary day. Two men, both of them strong, both of them loving her, were entering into the events of that day which was now beginning. Her pulse beat fast. She looked in her glass. She was satisfied that she looked her best. She knew she was a prize worth winning.

"I am glad——" she said to her glass.

And then she abruptly stopped thinking.

Spruce and well-groomed, looking as if he had just come from anywhere on earth except the trenches, Dick Travers faced Millicent Bryant across a table in a quiet corner of the restaurant he had chosen.

"You are looking splendid," he said.

"Am I?"

She knew it.

"It's almost unreal, being here."

"You don't like it? You think we should be living more soberly?"

"No. I am content."

And he seemed to her to take in a deep breath of contentment.

"I suppose it seems like a respite?"

"Yes. The gayer London is, the better the respite. When one is most serious one need not be miserable. I am glad, for instance, that to-day—my one day—is so gloriously fine."

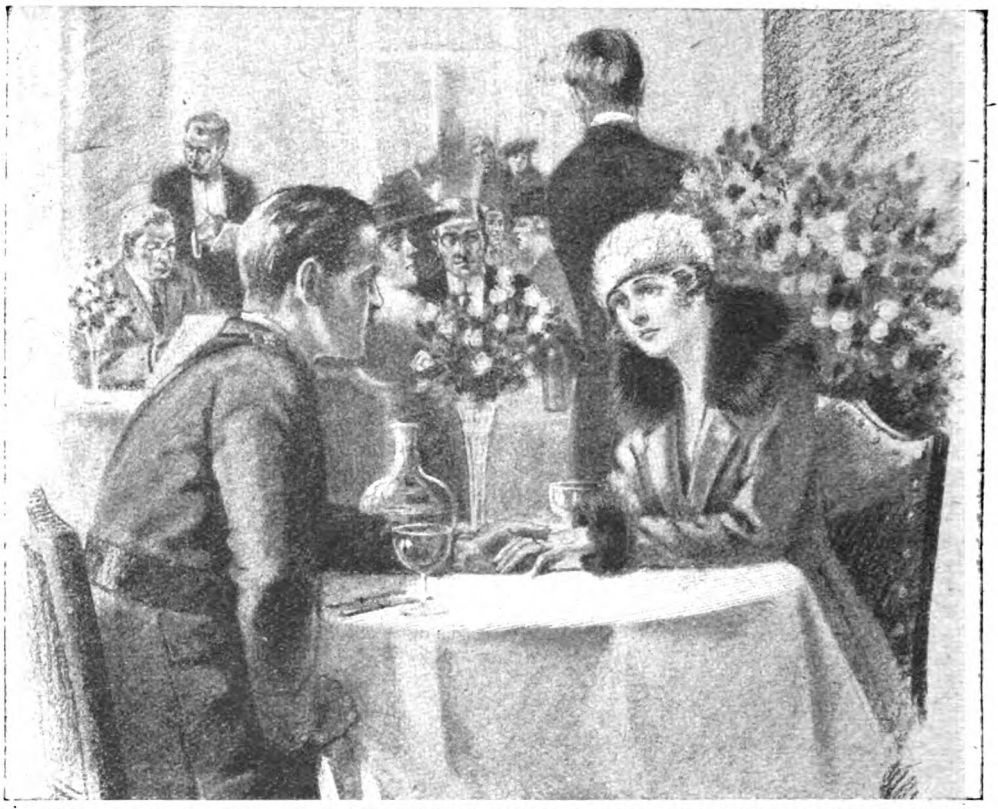
"And I am glad, too."

Her eyes shone.

He ordered lunch.

"You remember my favourite dishes."

"I never forget anything—about you."



"DICK TRAVERS FACED MILLICENT BRYANT ACROSS A TABLE IN A QUIET CORNER OF THE RESTAURANT."

For a moment her eyes thanked him.

"I am glad to think that is so," she said, gently. But he could not help seeing that she spoke as if she was sorry for him.

"What is the matter?"

"Nothing."

"You have not taken off your gloves."

"Haven't I?"

Without the slightest warning the situation between them had become strained.

She took off her right-hand glove and then slowly peeled off the glove from her left hand. And that hand she kept below the table. But Travers saw that she did so, and presently she knew it. He looked straight into her eyes. Her eyes fell. Then, much as a timid diver plunges into the water, she put her left hand on the table. On the third finger was a magnificent diamond ring.

"No," said Travers, abruptly, "I had not heard!"

"I couldn't tell you over the 'phone. I simply couldn't."

"When did it—happen?"

"It has only just happened."

She seemed to think the newness of the thing might be some sort of comfort to him.

"But it *has* happened."

"Yes. I—I—am sorry."

"Sorry? For Heaven's sake, Millie, don't play with me! There are plenty of women who play battledore and shuttlecock with a man's heart—without you."

"But——"

"Kennaway's?" He indicated the ring.

"Yes, Kennaway's."

"Why be sorry? He is a very clever and a very rich man. And as men go nowadays, he is quite young. I wish you every happiness, Millie. I must go back. But it was for *you* that I came over. I thought I had a chance."

"Don't talk like that—about going back."

"Like what?"

"As if——" She stopped. But he saw what was in her mind.

"As if I hoped that a bullet would find me—when I get back. Is that what you mean? I'm not that sort. Boys talk like that, I believe. I'm man enough to take a blow. At least, I hope so."

She braced herself. He had helped her.

Their lunch proceeded. It was as good a lunch as London could provide. But neither of them appreciated it as it should have been appreciated. But both of them being born of that class which understands the necessity of covering over a difficult situation with a decent cloak of small talk, both of them small-talked very cleverly, and then, quietly and naturally, said good-bye.

Travers remembered with satisfaction that he

had a club, though he seldom used it. He went to it, ordered some strong coffee and the best cigar the club could provide. He had not lingered over the usual after-lunch coffee as he had meant doing. He wanted to be by himself, and he snubbed a club acquaintance to ensure being alone. He found a deep and isolated arm-chair. In fact, he carefully wheeled it into isolation.

Well, London——

He shrugged his shoulders. Making money, the rewards of making money, the need of being above the anxieties of being short of money. . . . Well, Dick Travers's thoughts had been put a little out of joint. He was getting them under control. What he had said about not being a boy was quite true. He was not a fool of a boy. But just for that reason it was the more hard for him to lose the one woman he had ever loved. He probably would never love any other woman quite as he loved Millie.

The trenches! In a few hours he would be back there—his life at stake. He thought of things he had seen there—little things. Men were fighting out there to keep things going here in London. Men were level with each other out there as men. Men died out there, not always easily—were snuffed out, were maimed for life. Often it was a savage enough life, a rough life, but a man's life. And Kennaway was getting the rewards—one of those getting the rewards. He could not help thinking of that. . . . Millie—what a splendid reward! He set his teeth. He had to get through his bad hour. He would get through it. Trust him! But it hurt. It hurt horribly.

And yet others—well, *others* had died.

And that gave him relief. Others had died. The last man he remembered hearing of just before he got out of the trenches was James Perkins.

"A decent fellow—a thoroughly decent fellow—snuffed out. I'm glad I went to see him. I'm sure he died the happier because I went to see him in that hospital. Poor fellow, he had to die hard. But he had the grit to do it. He never whined. But, of course, I know what he was thinking."

And that incident of his visit to the man who had once been his orderly just before he left France was vivid again before Travers's eyes—the little bed, the nurse in the background, the certain end.

"Is there anything I can do for you, Perkins?" He could almost hear his own voice asking that question.

"Only if, some time, you could go and see her, sir."

"Certainly, if I can have her address."

It was already written down on a leaf in his pocket-book.

"If you can do anything——"

"For her? Of course I will."

"Well for her and——"

"Children, Perkins?"

"Yes, sir—two little boys. I should like them to get a better start than I ever got."

His voice was quite firm. Obviously his children were very much to him—more than his wife. You sometimes find that.

"You may rely on my doing anything I can."

Then he had shaken hands with him—the last hand-shake probably James Perkins had with a fellow-man before he solved for himself the great mystery which is beyond everyone's life.

"I suppose I have the address with me," Travers said to himself now as he sat, alone, in his club.

He opened his pocket-book and saw he had—181, Block C, Featherstone Buildings, Hoxton.

"Let me see, have I ever been in Hoxton? But a taxi will find the way, anyhow."

No good thinking about Millie. Dick Travers had something to do. He got up to go and do it.

A motor-car stood outside the stage-door of the Thespis Theatre. In it sat Dick Travers, waiting. Somewhere in the theatre was Millicent Bryant. She had by now read the note which had been taken in to her.

"I want to see you at once. I have something important to tell you. I would not trouble you were I not sure that you would also regard it as important. I am waiting for you in a car. Come without wasting any time, and send me word that you will come.—DICK."

That had been the note, and she had sent word that she would come as soon as she possibly could—within five or ten minutes of leaving the stage.

Consequently Travers sat contented, smoking a cigarette. He knew Millie could be relied upon. He was satisfied that she would give her decision fairly. During the last few hours he had been thinking hard. Now at last he was acting. Everything was cut and dried.

The back street behind the theatre was very quiet. Occasionally someone passed. But only occasionally. The windows of the car were down and the soft summer night air came in pleasantly, and Travers welcomed it. He was very cool now the crisis of his life had come to a climax. Chance—was it chance?—had given him an opportunity at the eleventh hour. It was really farther on in his forty-eight hours than the eleventh hour. He smiled as he counted them up—what had gone—what were left to him. He could just do what he had to do, but only just. Did he dream of success as he sat there? Did he count on winning his prize? No. He had done all he could do. But it would be curious if Millie did not agree with him, and he was quite justified in all he had done, all he intended to do, and all he intended to say. He lighted a fresh cigarette. It rested with Millie. He was content.

Presently she came. She came quite quietly and unflustered and stepped into the car. He could see she was anxious. She could see that something serious was on foot. But she was quite calm. She even smiled, frankly and pleasantly.

"He knows the address," Travers said, as the car began to move.

"Where are you taking me?"

"To Hoxton."

"Hoxton?"

"To see a woman—a Mrs. Perkins."

"What for?"

"She will tell you. I would prefer to say nothing at all. I am an interested party. I wish you to be quite free to judge for yourself."

"Is it any good my asking you any questions?"

"No good."

So they sat together, silent.

And as they sat thus they found—both of them found—that solitude together and silence were not unpleasant. Neither of them really wished to break that silence with trivial remarks on things which did not really matter to them at all. Only one thing mattered, and that one thing was in abeyance.

"Well?"

The visit to 181, Block C, Featherstone Buildings, Hoxton, was over, and Travers now wanted to know the verdict. They were again together in the car. But now they were no longer silent.

"It's dreadful," said Millicent, unsteadily.

"What is dreadful?"

"That a woman should have to work like that."

"Yes. She has to make sixty shirts a week to make nine-and-sevenpence. That is to say, she has to work every hour of every day from early morning to late at night. It's late now. We found her at work. *Even though she had received the news which I this afternoon gave her, she was still at work.* It is what is called sweating, and a pretty bad case of it."

"Yes."

"You saw her bent shoulders, her weary eyes. You understand how her fingers and her whole body must ache."

"Yes."

"You are quite right. It is dreadful. This one particular case of sweating, however, is going to end. I myself am stopping it—because I knew her husband. Mrs. Perkins is in luck's way. Thousands of others like her will never know *her* luck. The only luck they will know will be when they break down."

"Don't talk like that. I can understand without your—rubbing it in."

"I want you to understand thoroughly. *You must do so.* The woman we have just left gets one-and-elevenpence a dozen for making those shirts. The Government pays nine-and-threepence for them. Contractors and sub-contractors rake in the difference. You heard the name of the firm for which Mrs. Perkins is working—Newington Brothers. Need I tell you any more?"

"No. I know what is coming. I have guessed."

"Exactly. Denzil Kennaway has the controlling interest in Newington Brothers. I could prove it if you wish."

"I accept it."

"He is growing very rich out of this war. *You see how.*"

"Yes. I do."

"I thought you ought to see how he is growing so rich. I don't deny his cleverness. But, for my part, he is welcome to his ill-gotten wealth."

"He is not personally responsible."

"Well—that's a fine point. Personally, I am not good at fine points and subtle distinctions."

"There are hundreds like him."

"Possibly there may be thousands."

His face was set and hard, his voice quiet and well under control.

"May I smoke?" he asked.

"Certainly."

He lighted a cigarette.

They lapsed into silence.

"Don't be too hard on me, Dick," she said, at length. "Remember I belong to a large family. It is poor. It relies on me for help. If my health broke down I should not be able to do my work on the stage——"

"But as a rich man's wife you would still be in a position to help?"

"Yes. That was why——"

"A great many girls have ruined their lives under the cloak of that sort of excuse."

"I don't know what to do, Dick."

His heart jumped. She was appealing to him!

"Well, it's easy enough for you to see what I want you to do."

"You think *I knew.*"

"No. You never inquired. Why should you?"

"I knew only when I found out where you were bringing me to-night. But I know now. I don't know what to do."

"Well, it disgusts me. I am glad to be going back to France. Men are content to be fighting there for the things they think civilization means. It's just as well they don't know what it means—some things it does mean. Diamond rings which cost a hundred pounds or more are sometimes bought with money which has been made out of human flesh and blood!"

"Oh, Dick, how brutal!"

"Brutal, but true."

It was hurting him to be brutal to her. But he thought it his only chance. And he may be forgiven for not troubling to spare Kennaway.

"Yes—perhaps it's true. But it is you who are brutal."

"I—brutal?"

"Yes—to me."

Her eyes were shining. She was thinking that he was very slow, and also that the car was rapidly covering distance, and the time growing short.

"*I* brutal to *you?*"

"Yes."

"I—I don't understand."

"Well—I want your help. I don't know what to do."

"How?"

"I can't marry Kennaway now. How can I break it off most easily?"

"Millie!"

In his utter disregard for her dress and her hair Travers was brutal.

Their time was very short. Therefore they had to talk soberly.

"Take that ring off."

"I can't, you foolish boy! I took it off long ago."

"When?"

"When I was coming down the stairs in Featherstone Buildings behind you."

"How splendid!"

Dick Travers was almost a boy again.

But the shadow of that room in Hoxton was upon them even in their joy. Also another shadow — the rapidly-approaching moment of their separation.

"Come, Dick," said Millicent Bryant. "What must be done about Mrs. Perkins? If it hadn't been for your going to see her I might have gone over the precipice."

"Well, *that's* all clear. You go and see her to-morrow. Take or send her and the children into the country. Make her understand that in the future she will be enabled to work under decent conditions, and that the children will not be forgotten. It was a lucky chance I happened on this Perkins business. So we must not forget to be thankful."

"Chance?"

Her voice was unsteady as she threw out this single word of challenge.

He looked at her.

Puzzled at first, he then smiled.

"No," he said, "I do not owe you to chance."

And then, very quietly and very reverently, knowing in what shadows they sat there, holding precariously their great happiness, he kissed her on the lips.

And once again there was silence between them, as she rested in his arms.

"AND THEN, VERY QUIETLY AND VERY REVERENTLY, HE KISSED HER ON THE LIPS."

Late that night—close to the end of the forty-eight hours—we will take a look at the three principal characters in our story.

It is in the small hours. None of the three think for a moment any human eyes are turned upon them. They are quite alone. They are quite themselves.

Millicent Bryant—our heroine—the successful young actress—the beautiful and sweet woman whom Dick Travers loves—is on her knees, there at her bedside in the solitude and darkness of her bedroom. Sleep is impossible for her, and I think we may guess what she is praying for. I think we may also pray that her prayer may be granted.

Dick Travers has just got on to the Channel boat. He has gone right forward. He stands by himself near the bow and he is looking out into the darkness. But in his heart there is warmth and gladness.

The third person, whom we now really meet only for the first time, is Denzil Kennaway. His house in Kensington is still and quiet. He is sitting by himself in a very comfortable chair at his desk-table in his library. At his elbow is a small electric green-shaded lamp. He is covering the top sheet of a pad of paper with figures.

"FIGURES, FIGURES, MONEY, MONEY—FLESH AND BLOOD!"

Figures, figures, money, money—flesh and blood! Just as Millicent Bryant has left him so I think we may now leave him—*alone* with his wealth—alone with his wealth, as every one of us will some day be left *alone* with God.

War Cartoons of 1870.

The following Cartoons, published in Paris during the war of 1870, would have lost nothing of their point if they had appeared to-day. The first of these, by the well-known artist, Daumier, shows the Prussian troops pillaging a house, and going off with the furniture in their "New Car of Victory," exactly in the manner of the Crown Prince. The other three Cartoons are by "Cham," also a well-known artist, who was really a son of the Marquis de Noé. They explain themselves: The ladies carrying lamps along the darkened streets—not, however, for fear of aircraft but for want of gas; the devastated countryside, so horrible that the blind beggar is lucky in not being able to see it; and, finally, the Prussian soldier going off with an armful of stolen clocks which "will not keep the hour of vengeance from striking." It is striking now.

THE NEW CAR OF VICTORY!

"IT IS BETTER TO BE BLIND!"

ON THE DARKENED BOULEVARDS.

THEY WILL NOT KEEP THE HOUR OF VENGEANCE FROM STRIKING BY STEALING THE CLOCKS.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

380.—CHANGING PLACES.

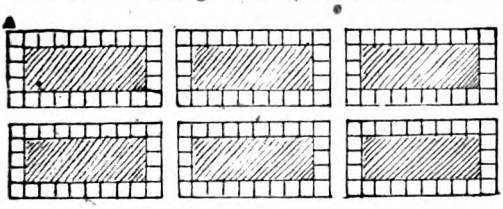
HERE is a queer little puzzle that I recently propounded to myself on a corner of the chessboard while waiting for an antagonist to play me a game. At first I thought it impossible, but it is not. It is simply required to make the White and Black pieces change places, moving one of each colour alternately without ever allowing any piece to attack, or be attacked by, one of the opposite colour. That is, the two rooks must change places, and the two knights also change places. Thus, the only possible first move for White is either 1—5 or 2—11. If you choose 1—5, then the only move for Black is 16—12, after which White can only play 5—1, and Black 12—16. So it is obvious that the first move must be 2—11. It can be done in seventeen moves.

381.—A DREAMLAND CLOCK.

IN a dream I was travelling in a country where they had strange ways of doing things. One little incident was fresh in my memory when I awakened. I saw a clock and announced the time as it appeared to be indicated, but my guide corrected me. He said, "You are apparently not aware that the minute hand always moves in the opposite direction to the hour hand. Except for this improvement, our clocks are precisely the same as those you have been accustomed to." Now, as the hands were exactly together between the hours of four and five o'clock, and they started together at noon, what was the real time?

382.—THE POSTWOMAN'S PUZZLE.

A POSTWOMAN has to deliver letters at the houses in six blocks, as shown in the illustration, calling at every house on the four sides of a block. She wants to know the shortest possible route, starting from the corner A and ending there. The conditions are of the greatest simplicity. The blocks measure 100 yards by 50 yards and the streets are 10 yards wide. Take your pencil and try to find the shortest route. To go round a block takes 300 yards clearly, and as there are six blocks this means 1,800 yards at least. The whole question lies in the economy of crossing the streets, and in avoiding the necessity of going over the same ground twice.



383.—SHARING THEIR POCKET-MONEY.

NINE boys and three girls agreed to share equally their pocket-money. Every boy gave an equal sum to every girl and every girl gave another equal sum to every boy. Every child then possessed exactly the same amount. What is the smallest possible amount they each then held?

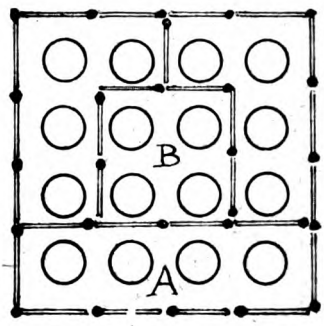
384.—A CHARADE.

My *first* you'll admit is a kind of a squeeze,
Not always intended exactly to please.
My *second*, no doubt, is just simply a sign.
My *whole* is a metal not found in a mine.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

375.—A NEW MATCH PUZZLE.

THE illustration shows one of the four distinctive ways of solving this little puzzle with eleven, an *odd* number of matches. If you first enclose an outside row, as A, then you can enclose the square, B, in any position and complete the solution with eleven matches in all.



376.—MRS. WILSON'S FAMILY.

THE ages must have been as follows: Mrs. Wilson, 39; Edgar, 21; James, 18; John, 18; Ethel, 12; Daisy, 9. It is clear that James and John were twins.

377.—A WORD SQUARE.

P L E A S E
L A R D E R
E R R A T A
A D A P T S
S E T T E E
E R A S E S

378.—AN OLD CHESS PUZZLE.

PLAY the following moves for White, whatever Black may do. If he tries to escape by the right-hand top corner, or resents being driven there, it is all the same: 1. B—Kt 7, ch.; 2. B—Kt 8; 3. K—Q R 7; 4. B—Q R 6; 5. B—Q 3; 6. K—Kt 7; 7. K—B 8; 8. B—B 7; 9. B—Q 8; 10. K—Q 7; 11. B—K 7; 12. K—K 8; 13. B—B 8; 14. B—K 2; 15. B—R 5; 16. K—K 7 (*a*); 17. K—B 7; 18. B checks (*b*); 19. B mates.

(*a*) It is assumed Black played his best, 15. K—Kt sq., otherwise White plays 16. K—B 7 at once and saves a move. (*b*) At Kt 6 or Kt 7, as the case may be.

379.—AN ENIGMA.

AT-TEN-U-ATE.

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

HOW SWEETS ARE SOLD IN EGYPT.

THE photograph I'm sending you is an Egyptian sweet man, though you might find this hard to believe. What looks like a white flag clinging to the pole is some white sticky stuff. The ball on the top is the same idea as a baby's rattle. As he walks along he shakes the pole and makes it rattle to attract attention. If you buy any sweets from him he pulls off a lump with his hand—no paper supplied. So, you see, it is a pretty sticky business.—Corporal W. G. Talbot.

A FAVOURITE COWBOY PASTIME.

THE cowboy's love of sport is proverbial, and the accompanying photograph, taken on a Western ranch, shows one of these daring men of the plains riding a steer. This is a pastime frequently indulged in by the cowboys. A young animal is selected, captured, and roughly harnessed. The instant he is let loose a cowboy leaps upon his back, and away he rushes. Finding the load still on his back after a dash round the enclosure, the animal commences a series of jerky springs into the air. This sort of thing is quite to the rider's taste, and the more the animal jumps the more he is encouraged to do so. Soon the steer recognizes that different tactics are necessary if he is to rid himself of the load upon his back. He sticks his forefeet firmly into the ground and throws his hind legs up in the air like a buck-jumping horse. This is usually the finish of the short but exciting programme, as, unless the rider is an expert and used to breaking-in horses, he finds it practically impossible to remain in the saddle, and is thrown.—Mr. Harold J. Shepstone, 139, Broomwood Road, Clapham Common, S.W.

DOLLS WITH LIVING DRESSES.

THE Chinese are very clever at all kinds of garden tricks, and in the photograph reproduced herewith is shown a novel idea that is often carried out by these ingenious Eastern gardeners. A little wooden framework with a doll's head and arms is fixed up in a flower-pot. Then, at the base, some creeping plant is sown, and as this grows it is trained around the framework. The effect, when the plant is fully grown, is to provide the little figure with a most beautiful dress of greenery. These dolls, with their novel dresses, are highly valued as house ornaments.—Mr. Leonard S. Bastin, Castlemain Avenue, Bournemouth.

Bridge Problem.

By Ernest Bergholt.

Hearts—Knave, 7, 5, 4.
Clubs—3.
Diamonds—7.
Spades—Ace, queen, 4.

Hearts—Queen, 9
Clubs—Knave, 8, 4.
Diamonds—10, 9, 5.
Spades—Knave.

Hearts—10, 8.
Clubs—Queen, 10.
Diamonds—8, 6.
Spades—10, 9, 7.

Hearts—Ace.
Clubs—Ace, 7, 6.
Diamonds—Knave, 3, 2.
Spades—6, 5.

Hearts are trumps, and A has the lead. A B are to win eight out of the nine tricks against any possible defence.

(The solution will appear next month.)

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PURE
BREAKFAST
Cocoa
See Page 22.

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"I FEEL A CURRENT IN THE UNIVERSE THAT SETS AGAINST ME, AGAINST US."

(*See page 527.*)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 54. DECEMBER, 1917 No. 324.

"PLAIN GERMAN."

By

PERCEVAL GIBBON.

Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

BEYOND the arcaded sidewalks, whose square-pillared arches stand before the house-fronts like cloisters, the streets of Thun were channels of standing sunlight, radiating heat from every cobblestone. Herr Haase, black-coated and white-waistcoated as for a festival, his large blond face dump and distressful, came panting into the hotel with the manner of an exhausted swimmer climbing ashore. In one tightly-gloved hand he bore a large and bulging linen envelope.

"*Pfui!*" He puffed, and tucked the envelope under one arm in order to take off his green felt hat and mop himself. "*Aber*—what a heat, what a heat!"

The brass-buttoned hotel porter, a-sprawl in a wicker chair in the hall, lowered his newspaper and looked up over his silver spectacles. He was comfortably unbuttoned here and there, and had omitted to shave that morning, for this was July, 1916, and since the war had turned Switzerland's tourists into Europe's cannon-fodder, he had run somewhat to seed.

"Yes, it is warm," he agreed, without interest, and yawned. "You have come to see"—he jerked his head towards the white staircase and its strip of red carpet—"to see *him*—not? He is up there. But what do you think of the news this morning?"

Herr Haase was running his handkerchief round the inside of his collar. "To see him! I have come to see the Herr Baron von Steinlach," he retorted, crossly. "And what news are you talking about *now?*" He continued to pant and wipe while the porter read from his copy of the *Bund* the German official communiqué of the previous day's fighting on the Somme.

"I don't like it," said the porter, when he had finished. "It looks as if we were losing ground. Those English——"

Herr Haase pocketed his handkerchief and took the large envelope in his hand again. He was a bulky, middle-aged man, one of whose professional qualifications it was that he looked and sounded commonplace, the type of citizen who is the patron of beer-gardens, wars of aggression, and the easily-remembered catch-words which are the whole political creed of his kind. His appearance was the bushel under which his secret light burned profitably; it had indicated him for his employment as a naturalized citizen of Switzerland and the tenant of the pretty villa on the hill above Thun, whence he drove his discreet and complicated traffic in those intangible wares whose market is the Foreign Office in Berlin.

He interrupted curtly. "Don't talk to me about the English!" he puffed. "*Gott strafe England!*" He stopped. The porter was paid by the same hand as himself. The hall was empty save for themselves, and there was no need to waste good acting on a mere stage-hand in the piece.

"The English," he said, "are going to have a surprise!"

"Eh?" The slovenly man in the chair gaped up at him stupidly. Herr Haase added to his

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words the emphasis of a nod and walked on to the stairs.

In the corridor above a row of white-painted bedroom doors had each its number. Beside one of them a tall young man was sunk spinelessly in a chair, relaxed to the still warmth of the day. He made to rise as Herr Haase approached, swelling for an instant to a drilled and soldierly stature, but, recognizing him, sank back again.

"He's in there," he said, languidly. "Knock for yourself."

"*Schlapschwanz!*" remarked Herr Haase, indignantly, and rapped upon the door. A voice within answered indistinctly. Herr Haase, removing his hat, opened the door and entered.

The room was a large one, an hotel bedroom converted into a sitting-room, with tall French windows opening to a little veranda, with a view across the lime-trees of the garden to the blinding silver of the lake of Thun and the eternal snowfields of the Bernese Oberland. Beside the window and before a little spindle-legged writing-table a man sat. He turned his head as Herr Haase entered.

"*Ach, der gute Haase,*" he exclaimed.

Herr Haase brought his patent leather heels together with a click and bowed like a T-square.

"*Excellenz!*" he said, in a strange, loud voice, rather like a man in a trance. "Your Excellency's papers, received by the train arriving from Bern at eleven-thirty-five."

The other smiled, raising to him a pink and elderly face, with a clipped white moustache and heavy tufted brows under which the faint blue eyes were steady and ironic. He was a large man, great in the frame and massive; his movements had a sure, unhurried deliberation, and authority, the custom and habit of power, clad him like a garment. Years and the moving forces of life had polished him as running water polishes a stone. The Baron von Steinlach showed to Herr Haase a countenance supple as a hand and formidable as a fist.

"Thank you, my good Haase," he said, in his strong deliberate German. "You look hot. This sun, eh? Poor fellow!"

But he did not bid him sit down. Instead, he turned to the linen envelope, opened it, and shook out upon the table its freight of lesser envelopes, typed papers, and newspaper-clippings. Deliberately, but yet with a certain discrimination and efficiency, he began to read them. Herr Haase, whose new patent leather boots felt red-hot to his feet, whose shirt was sticking to his back, whose collar was melting, watched him expressionlessly.

"There is a cloud of dust coming along the lake road," said the Baron presently, glancing through the window. "That should be Captain von Wetten in his automobile. We will see what he has to tell us, Haase."

"At your orders, Excellency," deferred Herr Haase.

"Because"—he touched one of the papers before him—"this news, Haase, is not good. It is not good. And this discovery here, if it be all that is claimed for it, should work miracles."

He glanced up at Herr Haase and smiled again. "Not that I think miracles can ever be worked by machinery," he added.

It was ten minutes after this that the column of dust on the lake-road delivered its core and cause in the shape of a tall man, who knocked once at the door and strode in without waiting for an answer.

"Ah, my dear Von Wetten," said the Baron, pleasantly. "It is hot, eh?"

"An oven," replied Von Wetten, curtly. "This place is an oven. And the dust—*ach!*"

The elder man made a gesture of sympathy. "Poor fellow," he said. "Sit down; sit down. Haase, that chair!"

And Herr Haase, who controlled a hundred and twelve subordinates, who was a Swiss citizen and a trusted secret agent, brought the chair and placed it civilly, neither expecting nor receiving thanks.

The new-comer was perhaps twenty-eight years of age, tall, large in the chest and little in the loins, with a narrow, neatly-chiselled face which fell naturally to a chill and glassy composure. "Officer" was written on him as clear as a brand; his very quiet clothes sat on his drilled and ingrained formality of posture and bearing as noticeably as a mask and domino; he needed a uniform to make him inconspicuous. He picked up his dangling monocle, screwed it into his eye, and sat back.

"And now?" inquired the Baron, agreeably, "and now, my dear Von Wetten, what have you to tell us?"

"Well, *Excellenz*——" Captain von Wetten hesitated. "As a matter of fact, I've arranged for you to see the thing yourself this afternoon."

The Baron said nothing—merely waited, large and still against the light of the window which shone on the faces of the other two.

Captain von Wetten shifted in his chair awkwardly. "At five, *Excellenz*," he added; "it'll be cooler then. You see, Herr Baron, it's not the matter of the machine—I've seen that all right; it's the man."

"*So!*" The explanation, which explained nothing to Herr Haase, seemed to satisfy the Baron. "The man, eh? But you say you have seen the machine. It works?"

"It worked all right this morning," replied Von Wetten. "I took my own explosives with me, as you know—some French and English rifle-cartridges and assortment of samples from gun charges and marine mines. I planted some in the garden; the place was all pitted already with little craters from his experiments; and some, especially the mine stuff, I threw into the lake. The garden's on the edge of the lake, you know. Well, he got out his machine—thing like a photographic camera, rather, on a tripod—turned it this way and that till it pointed to my explosives, and pop! off they went like a lot of fireworks. Pretty neat, I thought."

"Ah!" The Baron's elbow was on his desk and his head rested in his hand. "Then it *is*—what that Italian fellow said he had discovered in 1914. 'Ultra-red rays,' he called them. What was his name, now?"

"Never heard of him," said Von Wetten.

From the background where Herr Haase stood among the other furniture came a cough. "Oliver," suggested Herr Haase, mildly.

The Baron jerked a look at him. "No, not Oliver," he said. "Ulivi—that was it; Ulivi! I remember at the time we were interested, because, if the fellow could do what he claimed——" He broke off. "Tell me," he demanded of Von Wetten. "You are a soldier; I am only a diplomat. What would this machine mean in war—in this war, for instance? Supposing you were in command upon a sector of the Front; that in the trenches opposite you were the English, and you had this machine? What would be the result?"

"Well!" Von Wetten deliberated. "Pretty bad for the English, I should think," he decided.

"But how, man—how?" persisted the Baron. "In what way would it be bad for them?"

Von Wetten made an effort; he was not employed for his imagination. "Why," he hesitated, "because—I suppose the cartridges would blow up in the men's pouches and in the machine-gun belts; and then the trench-mortar ammunition and the hand-grenades—well, everything explosive would simply explode! And then we'd go over to what was left of them, and it would be finished."

He stopped abruptly as the vision grew clearer. "*Aber*——" he began, excitedly.

The old Baron lifted a hand and quelled him. "The machine you saw this morning, which you tested, will do all this?" he insisted.

Von Wetten was staring at the Baron. Upon the question he let his monocle fall and seemed to consider. "I—I don't see why not," he replied.

The Baron nodded thrice, very slowly. Then he glanced up at Herr Haase. "Then miracles *are* worked by machinery, after all," he said. Then he turned again to Von Wetten.

"Well?" he said. "And the man? We are forgetting the man; I think we generally do, we Germans. What is the difficulty about the man?"

Von Wetten shrugged. "The difficulty is that he won't name his price," he answered. "Don't understand him! Queer, shambling sort of fellow, all hair and eyes, with the scar of an old cut, or something, across one side of his face. Keeps looking at you as if he hated you! Showed me the machine readily enough; consented to every test—even offered to let me take my stuff to the other side of the lake, three miles away, and explode it at that distance. But when it came to terms, all he'd do was look the other way and mumble."

"What did you offer him?" demanded the Baron.

"My orders, your Excellency," answered Captain von Wetten, formally, "were to agree to his price, but not to attempt negotiations in the event of difficulty over the terms. That was reserved for your Excellency."

"H'm!" The Baron nodded. "Quite right," he approved. "Quite right; there is something in this. Men have their price, but sometimes they have to be paid in a curious currency. By the way, how much money have we?"

Herr Haase, a mere living ache inhabiting the background, replied.

"I am instructed, *Excellenz*, that my cheque will be honoured at sight here for a million marks," he answered, in the loud hypnotized voice of the drill-ground. "But there is, of course, no limit."

The Baron gave him an approving nod. "No limit," he said. "That is the only way to do things—no limit, in money or anything else! Well, Haase can bring the car round at—what time, Von Wetten?"

"Twenty minutes to five!" Von Wetten threw the words over his shoulder.

"And I shall lunch up here; it's cooler. You'd better lunch with me, and we can talk. Send up a waiter as you go, my good Haase."

Herr Haase bowed, but clicked only faintly. "*Zu Befehl, Excellenz*," he replied, and withdrew.

In the hall below he sank into a chair, groaned and fumbled at the buttons of his boots. He was wearing them for the first time, and they fitted him as though they had been shrunk on to him. The porter, his waistcoat gaping, came shambling over to him.

"You were saying," began the porter, "that the English——"

Herr Haase boiled over. "*Zum Teufel mit den Engländern und mit Dir, Schafskopf!*" he roared, tearing at the buttons. "Send up a waiter to the Herr Baron—and call me a cab to go home in!"

It was in a sunlight tempered as by a foreboding of sunset, when the surface of the lake was ribbed like seasand with the first breathings of the evening breeze, that Herr Haase, riding proudly in the back seat of honour, brought the motor-car to the hotel. He had changed his garb of ceremony and servitude; he wore grey now, one of those stomach-exposing, large-tailed coats which lend even to the straightest man the appearance of being bandy-legged; and upon his feet were a pair of tried and proven cloth boots.

The porter, his waistcoat buttoned for the occasion, carried out a leather suit-case and placed it in the car, then stood aside, holding open the door, as the Baron and Von Wetten appeared from the hall. Von Wetten, true to his manner, saw neither Herr Haase's bow nor the porter's lifted cap; to him, salutations and civilities came like the air he breathed, and were as little acknowledged. The Baron gave to Herr Haase the compliment of a glance that took in the grey coat and the cloth boots and the ghost of an ironic, not unkindly smile.

"*Der gute Haase*," he murmured, and then, as though in absence of mind, "poor fellow, poor fellow!"

His foot was upon the step of the car when he saw the leather suit-case within. He paused in the act of entering.

"What is this baggage?" he inquired.

Von Wetten craned forward to look. "Oh,

that! I wanted you to see the machine at work, *Excellenz*, so I'm bringing a few cartridges and things."

His Excellency withdrew his foot and stepped back. "Explosives, eh?" He made a half-humorous grimace of distaste. "Haase, lift that bag out—carefully, man!—and carry it in front with you. And tell the chauffeur to drive cautiously!"

Their destination was to the eastward of the little town, where the gardens of the villas trail their willow-fringes in the water. Among them, a varnished yellow chalet lifted its tiers of glassed-in galleries among the heavy green of fir-trees; its door, close beside the road, was guarded by a gate of iron bars. The big car slid to a standstill beside it with a scrape of tyres in the dust.

"A moment," said the old Baron, as Herr Haase lifted his hand to the iron bell-pull that hung beside the gate. "Who are we? What nämes have you given, Von Wetten? Schmidt and Meyer—or something more fanciful?"

"Much more fanciful, *Excellenz*." Von Wetten allowed himself a smile. "I am Herr Wetten; your Excellency is Herr Steinlach. It could not be simpler."

The Baron laughed quietly. "Very good, indeed," he agreed. "And Haase? You did not think of him? Well, the good Haase, for the time being, shall be the Herr Von Haase. Eh, Haase?"

"*Zu Befehl, Excellenz*," deferred Herr Haase.

The iron bell-pull squealed in its dry guides; somewhere within the recesses of the house a sleeping bell woke and jangled. Silence followed. The three of them waited upon the road in the slant of the sunshine, aware of the odour of hot dust, trees, and water. Herr Haase stood, in the contented torpor of service and obedience, holding the heavy suit-case to one side of the gate; to the other, the Baron and Von Wetten stood together. Von Wetten, with something of rigidity even in his ease and insouciance, stared idly at the windows through which, as through stagnant eyes, the silent house seemed to be inspecting them; the Baron, with his hands joined behind him, was gazing through the gate at the unresponsive yellow door. His pink, strong face had fallen vague and mild; he seemed to dream in the sunlight upon the threshold of his enterprise. All of him that was formidable and potent was withdrawn from the surface, sucked in, and concentrated in the inner centres of his mind and spirit.

There sounded within the door the noise of footsteps; a bolt clashed, and there came out to the gate a young woman with a key in her hand. The Baron lifted his head and looked at her, and she stopped, as though brought up short by the impact of his gaze. She was a small creature, not more than twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, as fresh and pretty as apple-blossom. But it was more than shyness that narrowed her German-blue eyes as she stood behind the bars, looking at the three men.

Von Wetten, tall, comely, stepped forward. "Good afternoon, *gnädige Frau*. We have an appointment with your husband for this hour. Let me present—Herr Steinlach—Herr von Haase."

The two bowed at her; she inspected each in turn, still with that narrow-eyed reserve.

"Yes," she said then, in a small tinkle of a voice. "My husband is expecting you."

She unlocked the gate; the key resisted her, and she had to take both hands to it, flushing with the effort of wrenching it over. They followed her into the house, along an echoing corridor, to a front room whose windows framed a dazzling great panorama of wide water, steep blue mountain, and shining snow-slopes. Herr Haase, coming last with the suit-case, saw around the Baron's large shoulders how she flitted across and called into the balcony: "Egon, the Herren are here!" Then, without glancing at them again, she passed them and disappeared.

Herr Haase's wrist was aching with his burden. Gently, and with precaution against noise, he stooped, and let the suit-case down upon the floor. So that he did not see the entry at that moment of the man who came from the balcony, walking noiselessly upon rubber-soled tennis-shoes. He heard Von Wetten's "Good afternoon, Herr Bettermann," and straightened up quickly to be introduced.

He found himself taking the hand—it lay in his an instant as lifelessly as a glove—of a young man whose eyes, over-large in a tragically thin face and under a chrysanthemum shock of hair, were at once timid and angry. He was coatless, as though he had come fresh from some work, and under his blue shirt his shoulders showed angular. But what was most noticeable about him, when he lifted his face to the light, was the scar of which Von Wetten had spoken—a red and jagged trace of some ugly wound, running from the inner corner of the right eye to the edge of the jaw. He murmured some inaudible acknowledgment of Herr Haase's scrupulously correct greeting.

Then, as actually as though an arm of flesh and blood had thrust him back, Herr Haase was brushed aside. It was as if the Baron von Steinlach, choosing his moment, released his power of personality upon the scene as a man lets go his held breath. "A wonderful view you have here, Herr Bettermann," was all he said. The young man turned to him to reply; it was as though their opposite purposes and wills crossed and clashed like engaged swords. Herr Haase, and even the salient and insistent presence of Von Wetten, thinned and became vague—ghostly, ineffectual natives of the background—in the stark light of the reality of that encounter.

There were some sentences, mere foining, upon that radiant perspective which the wide windows framed. Then:—

"My friend and associate, Herr Wetten here, has asked me to look into this matter," said the Baron. His voice was silk, the silk "that holds fast where a steel chain snaps." "First to confirm his impressions of the—the apparatus; second"—the subtle faint-blue eyes of the old man and the dark suspicious eyes of the young man met and held each other—"and second, the question, the minor question, of the price. However"—his lips, under the clipped, white moustache, widened in a smile without mirth—"that need not take us long, since the price, you see, is not really a question at all."

The haggard young man heard him with no change in that painful tensity of his.

"Isn't it?" he said, shortly. "We'll see! But first, I suppose, you want to see the thing at work. I have here cordite, gelignite, trinitrotoluol, but——" his hare's eyes fell on the suit-case—"perhaps you have brought your own stuff?"

"Yes," said the Baron; "I have brought my own stuff."

The garden of the villa was a plot of land reaching down to a parapet lapped by the still stone-blue waters of the lake. Wooden steps led down to it from the balcony; Herr Haase, descending them last with the suit-case, paused an instant to shift his burden from one hand to the other, and had time to survey the place—the ruins of a lawn, pitted like the face of a small-pox patient with small holes, where the raw clay showed through the unkempt grass—the "craters" of which Captain von Wetten had spoken. Tall fir-trees, the weed of Switzerland, bounded the garden on either hand, shutting it in as effectually as a wall. Out upon the blue-and-silver floor of the lake a male human being rowed a female of his species in a skiff; and near the parapet, something was hooded under a black cloth, such as photographers use, beneath whose skirts there showed the feet of a tripod.

Herr Bettermann, the young man with the scar, walked across to it. At first glimpse, it had drawn all their eyes; each felt that here, properly and decently screened, was the core of the affair. It was right that it should be covered up and revealed only at the due moment; yet Bettermann went to it and jerked the black cloth off, raping the mystery of the thing as crudely as a Prussian in Belgium.

"Here it is," he said, curtly. "Put your stuff where you like."

The cloth removed disclosed a contrivance like two roughly cubical boxes, fixed one above the other, the upper projecting a little beyond the lower, and mounted on the apex of the tripod. A third box, evidently, by the terminals which projected from its cover, the container of a storage battery, lay between the feet of the tripod, and wires linked it with the apparatus above. Beside the tripod lay a small black bag such as doctors are wont to carry.

Von Wetten took a key from his pocket and threw it on the ground. "Unlock that bag," he said to Herr Haase, and turned towards the Baron and his host.

Herr Haase picked up the key, unlocked the suit-case, and stood ready for further orders. The Baron was standing with Bettermann by the tripod; the latter was talking and detaching some piece of mechanism from within the apparatus. His voice came clearly across to Herr Haase.

"Two blades," he was saying, "and one varies their angle with this. The sharper the angle, the greater the range of the ray and the shorter the effective arc. But, of course, this machine is only a model."

"Quite so," acquiesced the Baron.

"These"—his hand emerged from the upper box—"are the blades."

He withdrew from the apparatus a contrivance like a pair of brief tongs, of which the shanks were stout wires and the spatulates were oblongs of thin, whitish metal like aluminium, some three inches long by two wide.

"The essence of the whole thing," he said. "You see, they are hinged; one sets them wider or closer according to the range and the arc one requires. These plates—they are removable. I paint the compound on them, and switch the current on through this battery."

"Ah, yes," agreed the Baron, dreamily. "The compound—that has to be painted on."

The thin face of the inventor turned upon him; the great eyes smouldered. "Yes," was the answer; "yes. I—I paint it on—enough for three or four demonstrations, and then I throw the rest into the lake. So my secret is safe, you see."

The Baron met his eyes with the profound ironic calm of his own. "Safe, I am sure," he replied. "The safer the better. And now, where would you prefer us to arrange our explosives?"

The other shrugged his shoulders. "Where you like," he said, bending to the little black hand-bag. "Lay them on the ground or bury them, or throw them into the lake, if they're waterproof. Only don't put them too near the house. I don't want any more of my windows broken."

There was a tone of aggression in his voice, and his eyes seemed to affront them, then strayed in a moment's glance towards the house. Herr Haase, following his look, had a glimpse of the little wife upon the upper balcony looking down upon the scene. The young man with the scar—it glowed at whiles, red and angry—seemed to make her some sign, for she drew back out of sight at once.

Herr Haase would have liked to watch the further intercourse of the Baron and the lean young man; but Von Wetten, indicating to him a small iron spade, such as children dig with on the sea-beach, and a pointed iron rod, set him to work at making graves for the little paper-wrapped packages which he took from the suit-case. The Captain stood over him while he did it, directing him with orders curt as oaths and wounding as blows, looking down upon his sweating, unremonstrant obedience as from a very mountain-top of superiority. The clay was dry as flour, and puffed into dust under the spade; the slanting sun had yet a vigour of heat; and Herr Haase, in his tail-coat and his

cloth boots, floundered among the little craters and earth-heaps, and dug and perspired submissively.

As he completed each hole to Von Wetten's satisfaction, that demi-god dropped one or more of his small packages into it, and arranged them snugly with the iron rod. While he did so, Herr Haase eased himself upright, wiped the sweat from his brows, and gazed across at the other two. He saw the young man dipping a brush in a bottle, which he had taken from the black bag, and painting with it upon the metal plates, intent and careful; while beside him the old Baron, with his hands clasped behind his back, watched him with just that air of blended patronage and admiration with which a connoisseur, visiting a studio, watches an artist at work.

Von Wetten spoke at his elbow. "Fill this in!" he said, in those tones of his that would have roused rebellion in a beast of burden. "And tread the earth down on it firmly!"

"*Zu Befehl, Herr Hauptmann,*" answered Herr Haase, hastily. But he was slow enough in obeying to see the young man, his painting finished, take the bottle in his hand and toss it over the parapet into the lake and turn, the great jagged scar suddenly red and vivid on the pallor of his thin face, to challenge the Baron with his angry eyes.

The Baron met them with his small indomitable smile. "The machine is ready now?" he inquired, smoothly.

"Ready when you are," snapped the other.

Herr Haase had to return to his labours then and lose the rest of that battle of purposes, of offence offered and refused, which went on over the head of the waiting machine. Von Wetten left him for a while and was busy throwing things that looked like glass jars into the lake. When at last the fifth and final hole was filled and trodden down under the sore heels in the cloth boots, the others were standing around the apparatus. They looked up at him as he cast down the spade and clapped a hand to the main stiffness in the small of his back.

"All finished?" called the Baron. "Then come over here, my good friend, or you will be blown up. Eh, Herr Bettermann?"

Herr Bettermann shrugged those sharp shoulders of his; he was shifting the tripod legs of his machine. "Blow him up if you like," he said. "He's your man."

Von Wetten and the Baron laughed at that, the Baron civilly and perfunctorily, as one laughs at the minor jests of one's host, and Von Wetten as though the joke were a good one. Herr Haase smiled deferentially, and eased himself into the background by the parapet.

"And now," said the Baron, "to our fireworks!"

Herr Bettermann answered with the scowl-like contraction of the brows which he used in place of a nod.

"All right," he said. "Stand away from the front of the thing, will you! You know yourselves the kind of stuff you've buried—yes? *Also, los!*"

The old Baron had stepped back to Herr Haase's side; as the young man put his hands to the apparatus, he crisped himself with a sharp intake of breath for the explosion. A switch clicked under the young man's thumb, and he began to move the machine upon its pivot mounting, traversing it like a telescope on a stand. It came round towards the fresh yellow mounds of earth which marked Herr Haase's excavations; they had an instant in which to note, faint as the whirring of a fly upon a pane, the buzz of some small mechanism within the thing. Then, not louder than a heavy stroke upon a drum, came the detonation of the buried cartridges in the first hole, and the earth above them suddenly ballooned and burst like an over-inflated paper-bag and let through a spit of brief fire and a jet of smoke.

"*Ach, du lieber*——" began the Baron, and had the words chopped off short by the second explosion. A stone the size of a tennis-ball soared slowly over them and plopped into the water a score of yards away. The Baron raised an arm as if to guard his face, and kept it raised; Von Wetten let his eyeglass fall, lifted it in his hand and held it there; only Herr Haase, preserving his formal attitude of obedient waiting, his large bland face inert, stood unmoved, passively watching this incident of his trade.

The rest of the holes blew up nobly; the last was applauded by a crash of glass as one of the upper windows of the house broke and came raining down in splinters. The lean young man swore tersely.

"Another window!" he snarled.

The Baron lowered his arm and let his breath go in a sigh of relief. "That is all, is it not?" he demanded. "*Gott sei Dank*—I hate things that explode. But I am glad that I saw it, now that it is over—very glad indeed!"

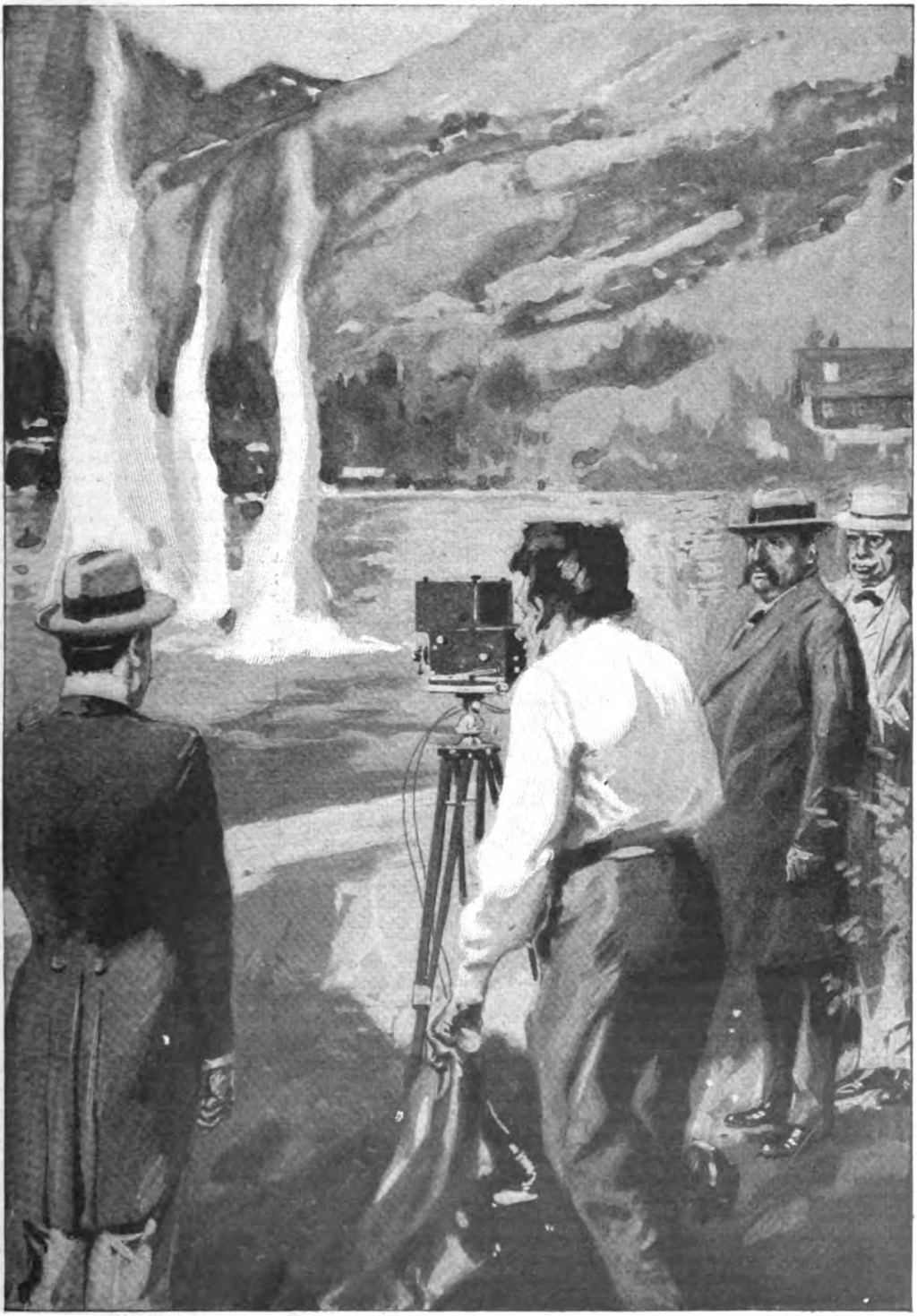
There was a touch of added colour in the even pink of his face, and something of restlessness, a shine of excitement, in his eyes. Even his voice had a new tone of unfamiliar urgency. He glanced to and fro from Von Wetten to Herr Haase as though seeking someone to share his emotion.

Bettermann's thin voice broke in curtly. "It isn't over," he said. "There's the stuff *he*"—with a glance like a stab at Von Wetten—"threw into the lake. Ready?"

"*Ach!*" the Baron stepped hastily aside. "Yes; I had forgotten that. Quite ready, my dear sir—quite ready. Haase, my good friend, I think I'll stand behind you this time."

"*Zu Befehl, Excellenz,*" acquiesced Herr Haase, and made of his solidity and stolidity a screen and a shield for the master-mind in its master-body. Herr Bettermann, bending behind his machine, took in the grouping with an eye that sneered and exulted, jerked his angular blue-clad shoulders contemptuously, and turned again to his business.

The eye of the machine roamed over the shining face of the water, seeming to peer searchingly into the depths of shining blue; the small interior whir started again upon the click of



"THE EYE OF THE MACHINE ROAMED OVER THE WATER; THE SMALL INTERIOR WHIR STARTED AGAIN; AND FORTHWITH THREE EXPLOSIONS TORE THAT TRANQUIL WATER-MIRROR, SPOUTING THREE GEYSER-JETS INTO THE AIR."

the switch, and forthwith three explosions, following upon each other rapidly, tore that tranquil water-mirror, spouting three geyser-jets into the sun-soaked evening air. The waves they raised slapped loudly at the wall below the parapet, and there were suddenly dead fish floating pale-bellied on the surface.

"Mines!" It was a whisper behind Herr Haase's large shoulder. "English mines!"

Herr Bettermann straightened himself upright behind the tripod. "There's a fine for killing fish like that," he remarked, bitterly. "And the window besides, curse it!"

The Baron looked round at him absently. "Too bad!" he agreed. "Too bad!" He moved Herr Haase out of his way with a touch of his hand and walked to the parapet. He stood there, seeming for some moments to be absorbed in watching the dead fish as they rocked in the diminishing eddies. Herr Bettermann picked up the black cloth and draped it again over his apparatus. There was a space of silence.

Presently, with a shrug as though he withdrew himself unwillingly from some train of thought, the Baron turned. "Yes," he said, slowly, half to himself. "Ye-es." He lifted his eyes to the inventor.

"Well, we have only three things to do" he said "They should not take us long. But—it is pleasant here in your garden, Herr Bettermann, and we might sit down while we do them."

He sat as he spoke, letting himself down upon the low parapet with an elderly deliberation; at his gesture Von Wetten sat likewise, a few yards away; Herr Haase moved a pace, hesitated, and remained standing.

"I'll stand," said Bettermann, shortly. "And what are the three things you've got to do?"

"Why," replied the Baron, evenly, "the obvious three, surely—to pay for your broken window—*nicht wahr?*—to pay the fine for killing the fish, and to pay your price for the machine. There is nothing else to pay for, is there?"

"Oh!" The young man stared at him.

"So, if you will tell us the figure that will content you, we can dispatch the matter," continued the Baron. "That is your part—to name a figure. Supposing always"—his voice slowed; the words dropped one by one—"supposing always that there *is* a figure!"

The other continued to stare, gaunt as a naked tree in the evening flush, his face white under his tumbled hair, the jagged scar showing upon it like a new wound.

"You don't suppose you'll get the thing for nothing, do you?" he broke out, suddenly.

The Baron shook his head. "No," he said, "I don't think that. But it has struck me I may not need my cheque-book. You see, for all I can tell, Herr Bettermann, the window may be insured; and the police may not hear of the fish; and as for the machine—well, the machine may be for sale; but you have less the manner of a salesman, Herr Bettermann, than any man I have ever seen."

The gaunt youth glowered uncertainly. "I'm not a salesman," he retorted, resentfully.

The Baron nodded. "I was sure of it," he said. "Well, if you'll let me, I'll be your salesman for you; I have sold things in my time, and for great prices too. Now, I can see that you are in a difficulty. You are a patriotic Swiss citizen and you have scruples about letting your invention go out of your own country; is that it? Because, if so, it can be arranged——"

He stopped; the lean youth had uttered a spurt of laughter, bitter and contemptuous.

"Swiss!" he cried. "No more Swiss than yourself, Herr Baron!"

"Eh?" To Herr Haase, watching through his mask of respectful aloofness, it was as though the Baron's mind and countenance together snapped almost audibly into a narrowed and intensified alertness. The deep, white-fringed brows gathered over the shrewd pale eyes. "Not a Swiss?" he queried. "What are you, then?"

"Huh!" the other jeered, openly. "I knew you the moment I saw you. Old Herr Steinlach, eh? Why, man, I've been expecting you and getting ready for you ever since your blundering, swaggering spy there"—with a jerk of a rigid thumb towards Von Wetten—"and this fat slave"—Herr Haase was indicated here—"first came sniffing round my premises. I *knew* they'd be sending you along with your blank cheques and your tongue; and here you are!"

He mouthed his words in an extravagance of offence and ridicule; his gaunt body and his thin arms jerked in a violence of gesticulation, and the jagged scar that striped his face pulsed from red to white. The old Baron, solid and unmoving on his seat, watched him with still attention.

"Not a Swiss?" he persisted, when the young man had ceased to shout and shrug.

For answer, suddenly as an attacker, the young man strode across to him and bent, thrusting his feverish and passion-eaten face close to the older man's. His forefinger, long, large-knuckled, jerked up; he traced with it upon his face the course of the great disfiguring scar that flamed diagonally from the inner corner of the right eye to the rim of the sharp jaw.

"Did you ever see a Swiss that carried a mark like that?" he cried, his voice breaking to a screech. "Or an Englishman, or a Frenchman? Or anybody but—but"—he choked breathlessly on his words—"or anybody but a German? Man, it's my passport!"

He remained yet an instant, bent forward, rigid finger to face, then rose and stepped back, breathing hard. The three of them stuck, staring at him.

Von Wetten broke the silence. "German?" he said, in that infuriating tone of peremptory incredulity which his kind—in all countries—commands. "*You* a German?"

The lean youth turned on him with a movement like a swoop. "Yes—*me!*" he spat. "And a deserter from my military service, too! Make the best of that, you Prussian *Schweinhund!*"

"*Wasz!*" Von Wetten started as though under a blow; his monocle fell; he made a curious gesture, bringing his right hand across to

"BETTERMANN TRACED UPON HIS FACE THE COURSE OF A GREAT DISFIGURING SCAR—'DID YOU EVER SEE ANYBODY BUT A GERMAN THAT CARRIED A MARK LIKE THAT? MAN, IT'S MY PASSPORT!'"

his left hip as though in search of something; and gathered himself as though about to spring to his feet. The Baron lifted a quiet hand and subdued him.

"Yes," he said, in his even, compelling tones. "Make the best of that, Von Wetten."

Von Wetten stared, arrested in the very act of rising. "*Zu Befehl, Herr Baron,*" he said, in a strained voice, and continued staring. The Baron watched him frowningly an instant, to make sure of his submission, and turned again to Herr Bettermann where he stood, lean and glowering, before them.

"Now," he said, "I am beginning to see my way—dimly, dimly. A deserter—a German—and that scar is your passport! Ye-es! Well, will you tell me, Herr Bettermann, in plain German, how you came by that scar?"

"Yes," said Bettermann, fiercely, "I will!"

Behind him, where the house-windows shone rosy in the sunset, Herr Haase could see upon the lower balcony the shimmer of a white frock and a face that peeped and drew back. The little wife was listening.

"It was the captain of my company," said

Bettermann, with a glare at Von Wetten. "Another Prussian swine-dog like this brute here." He waited. Von Wetten regarded him with stony calm and did not move. Bettermann flushed. "He sent me for his whip, and when I brought it, he called me to attention and cut me over the face with it."

"Eh?" The old Baron sat up. "*Aber*——"

"Just one cut across the face, me with my heels glued together and my hands nailed to my sides," went on Bettermann. "Then—'Dismiss!' he ordered, and I saluted and turned about and marched away with my smashed face. And then you ask me if I am a Swiss!" He laughed again.

"But," demanded the Baron, "what had you done? Why did he do that to you?"

"Didn't I tell you he was a Prussian swine?" cried Bettermann. "Isn't that reason enough? But, if you *will* know, he'd seen me speak to a lady in the street. Afterwards—me standing to attention, of course!—he made a foul comment on her, and asked me for her name and address."

"And—you wouldn't tell him?"

"Tell *him!*" cried Bettermann. "No!"

Herr Haase saw the girl on the balcony lean forward as though to hear the word, its pride and its bitterness, and draw back again as though to hear it had been all that she desired.

"Von Wetten!" The Baron spoke briskly. "You hear what Herr Bettermann tells me? Such things happen in the army—do they?"

Von Wetten shrugged. "They are strictly illegal, sir," he replied, formally. "There are severe penalties prescribed for such actions. But, in the army, in the daily give-and-take of the life of a regiment, of course, they *do* happen. Herr Bettermann"—very stiffly—"was unfortunate."

Bettermann was staring at him, but said nothing. The Baron glanced from Von Wetten to the lean young man and shook his head.

"I am beginning—I *think* I am beginning to see," he said. "And it seems to me that I shall not need that cheque-book. Herr Bettermann, I am very sure you have not forgotten the name of that officer."

"Forgotten!" said the other. "No, I've not forgotten. And, so that *you* sha'n't forget, I've got it written down for you!"

He fished a card from the breast-pocket of his blue shirt. The Baron received it, and held it up to the light.

"Captain Graf von Specht, —th Kaiserjager," he read aloud. "Ever hear of him, Von Wetten?"

Von Wetten nodded. "Neighbour of mine in the country, *Excellenz*," he replied. "We were at the cadet-school together. Colonel now; promoted during the war. He would regret, I am sure——"

"He *will* regret, I am sure," interrupted the Baron, pocketing the card. "And he will have good cause. Well, Herr Bettermann, I think I know your terms now. You want to see the Graf von Specht again—here? I am right, am I not?"

Bettermann's eyes narrowed at him. "Yes," he said. "You're right. Only—this time it is he that must bring the whip!"

Herr Haase's intelligence, following like a shorthand-writer's pencil, ten words behind the speaker, gave a leap at this. Till now, the matter had been for him a play without a plot; suddenly understanding, he cast a startled glance at Von Wetten.

The Captain sat up, alert.

"Certainly!" The old Baron was replying to young Bettermann. "And stand to attention! And salute! I told you that I would agree to your terms, and I agree accordingly. Captain—that is, Colonel von Specht shall be here, with the whip, as soon as the telegraph and the train can bring him. And then, I assume, the machine——"

"Pardon!" Captain von Wetten had risen. "I have not understood." He came forward between the two, very erect and military, and rather splendid with his high-held head and drilled comeliness of body. "There has been much elegance of talk and I am stupid, no doubt; but, in plain German, *what* is it that Colonel von Specht is to do?"

Bettermann swooped at him again, choking with words; the Captain stood like a monument, callous to his white and stammering rage, the personification and symbol of his caste and its privilege.

It was the Baron who answered from his seat on the parapet, not varying his tone and measured delivery.

"Colonel von Specht," he said, "is to bring a whip here and stand to attention while Herr Bettermann cuts him over the face with it. That is all. Now sit down and be silent."

Captain von Wetten did not move. "This is impossible," he said. "There are limits. As a German officer, I resent the mere suggestion of this insult to the corps of officers. Your Excellency——"

The Baron lifted that quiet hand of his. "I order you to sit down and be silent," he said.

Captain von Wetten hesitated. It seemed to Herr Haase, for a flattering instant, that the Captain's eyes sought his own, as though in recognition of a familiar and favourable spirit. He tried to look respectfully sympathetic.

"Very good, your Excellency," said Von Wetten, at length. "The Emperor, of course, will be informed."

He turned and stalked away to his former place. The Baron, watching him, smiled briefly.

"Well, Herr Bettermann," said the Baron, rising stiffly, "it will not help us to have this arrangement of ours in writing. I think we'll have to trust one another. Our chemists, then, can come to you for the formula as soon as you have finished with Colonel von Specht? That is agreed—yes? Good! And you see, I was right from the beginning; I did not need my cheque-book after all."

He began to move towards the house, beckoning Captain von Wetten and Herr Haase to follow him. Herr Haase picked up the empty suit-case, stood aside to let Von Wetten pass, and brought up the rear of the procession.

At the foot of the wooden steps that led up to the veranda, the Baron halted and turned to Bettermann.

"One thing makes me curious," he said. "Suppose we had not accepted your terms, what would you have done? Sold your machine to our enemies?"

Bettermann was upon the second step, gauntly silhouetted against the yellow wood of the house. He looked down into the elder man's strong and subtle face.

"No," he answered. "I meant to at first, but I haven't purged the German out of me yet—and I couldn't. But I'd let your army of slaves and slave-drivers be beaten by its own slavery—as it would be: and *you* know it. *I* wouldn't take a hand in it; only, if anything happened to me; if, for instance, I disappeared some night—well, you'd find the machine and the formula in the hands of the English, that's all!"

He turned and led the way up the wooden steps. It seemed to tired Herr Haase, lugging the suit-case, that Captain von Wetten was swearing under his breath.

He was not imaginative, our Herr Haase; facts were his livelihood and the nurture of his mind. But in the starved wastes of his fancy something had struck a root, and as he rode Thun-wards in the front seat of the car, with the suit-case in his lap and the setting sun in his eyes, he brooded upon it. It was the glimpse of the little wife in the balcony—the girl who had lived with the scar upon her husband's face and in his soul, and had leaned forward to eavesdrop upon his cruel triumph. Behind him, the two demigods talked together; snatches of their conversation tempted him to listen; but Herr Haase was engrossed with another matter. When the Prussian colonel, one living agony of crucified pride, stood for the blow, and the whip whistled through the air to thud on the flesh of his upturned face—would she be watching then?

He was still thinking of it when the car drew up at the hotel door.

"Upstairs at once," directed the Baron, as he stepped hastily to the sidewalk. "You too, my good Haase; we shall want you."

In the Baron's upper room, where that morning he had suffered the torture of the boot, Herr Haase was given a seat at the little writing-table. The Baron himself cleared it for him, wiping its piles of papers to the floor with a single sweep of his hand.

"Get ready to write the telegrams which we shall dictate," he commanded. "But first—will you be able to get them through in code?"

"Code is forbidden, your Excellency," replied Herr Haase, in his parade-voice. "But we have also a phrase-code—a short phrase for every word of the message—which passes. It makes the telegram very long."

"*Also gut!*" approved the Baron. "Now, Von Wetten, first we will wire the Staff. You know how to talk to them; so dictate a clear message to Haase here."

Von Wetten was standing by the door, hat and cane in hand. His face, with its vacant comeliness, wore a formality that was almost austere.

"*Zu Befehl, Excellenz,*" he replied. "But—has your Excellency considered that, after all, there may be other means? I beg your Excellency's pardon, but it occurs to me that we have not tried alternative offers. For instance, we are not limited as to money."

The Baron made a little gesture of impatience, indulgent and paternal. He leaned a hand on the table and looked over Herr Haase's head to the tall young officer.

"We are not limited as to colonels, either," he answered. "We must think ourselves lucky, I suppose, that he went no higher than a colonel. There was a moment when I thought he was going very much higher—to the very top, Von Wetten. For, make no mistake, that young man knows his value."

Von Wetten frowned undecidedly. "The top," he repeated. "There is only one 'top.' You can't mean——"

The Baron took the word from his mouth. "Yes," he said, "the Emperor. I thought for awhile he was going to demand that. And do you know what I should have answered?"

Von Wetten threw up his head and his face cleared. "Of course I know," he said. "You'd have cut the dirty traitor down where he stood!"

The Baron did not move. "No," he said. "I should have accepted those terms also, Von Wetten."

The Baron's hand rested on the edge of the table in front of Herr Haase; he sat, staring at it, a piece of human furniture on the stage of a tragedy. The other two confronted each other above his patient and useful head. He would have liked to look from one to the other, to watch their faces, but he was too deeply drilled for that. He heard Von Wetten's voice with a quaver in it.

"Then—things are going as badly as all that?"

"Yes," answered the Baron. "Badly! It is not just this battle that is going on now in France; it strikes deeper than that. The plan that was to give us victory has failed us; we find ourselves, with a strength which must diminish, fighting an enemy whose strength increases. We must not stop at anything now; what is at stake is too tremendous."

"But——"

The Baron hushed him. "Listen, Von Wetten," he said. "I will be patient with you. I do not speak to you of—of the Idea of which Germany and Prussia are the body and the weapon. No; but have you ever realized that you—yes, *you!*—belong to the most ridiculed, most despised nation on earth? That your countrywomen furnish about eighty per cent. of the world's prostitutes; that a German almost anywhere is a waiter, or a sausage-manufacturer, or a beer-seller—the butt of comic papers in a score of languages? All that has not occurred to you, eh? Well, think of it, and think, too, of what this machine may do for us. Think of a Germany armed in a weaponless world, and, if empire and mastery convey nothing to you, think of—oh! American women walking the

streets in Berlin, comic English waiters in German *cafés*, slavish French labourers in German sweat-shops. And all this boxed into a machine on a tripod by a monomaniac whose price we can pay!"

He paused and walked towards the window. "Dictate the telegram to the Staff, Von Wetten," he said, over his shoulder.

Von Wetten laid his hat and cane on a chair and crossed the room. "I feel as if I were stabbing a fellow-officer in the back," he said, drearily. Then, to Herr Haase: "Take this, you!"

"*Zu Befehl, Herr Hauptmann,*" said Herr Haase, and picked up his pen.

There were twelve long telegrams in all, of which many had to be amended, pruned, subedited, and rewritten; each was directed to a plain private address in Berlin, and each was to be answered to the address of Herr Haase. One, which gave more trouble than any of the others, was to Siegfried Mayer, Number One, Unter den Linden; it was long before the Baron and Von Wetten could smooth its phrases to a suavity and deference which satisfied them. Coffee was brought them to lubricate their labours, but none to Herr Haase; his part was to write down, scratch out, rewrite, while beyond the windows the night marched up from the east and the lake grew bleak and vague.

"Now, my good Haase," said the Baron, when the last word-fabric was decided upon and confirmed, "you will take those home with you, put them into code, and dispatch them. You should have the last of them off by midnight. And to-morrow, when the answers begin to come, you will report here as quickly as possible."

"*Zu Befehl, Excellenz,*" said Herr Haase, his hands full of papers.

"Then good night, my good Haase," said the Baron.

"Good night to your Excellency," returned Herr Haase, from the doorway. "Good night, *Herr Hauptmann!*"—to Von Wetten's back.

"Shut the door," replied Von Wetten.

There was a moon at midnight, a great dull disc of soft light touching the antique gables and cloistered streets of the little city to glamour, blackening the shadows under the arches, and streaking the many channels of the swift river with long reflections. Herr Haase, returning from the telegraph office, walked noiseless as a ghost through those ancient streets, for he had soft bedroom slippers on his feet. His work was done for the day; he had put off business as one lays aside a garment. From his lips ascended the mild incense of one of those moist yellow cigars they make at Vevey. He paused upon the first bridge to gaze down upon the smooth, hurrying water, and his soul—that soul which served the general purpose of a monkey-wrench in adjusting the machine of history—spoke aloud.

"A rum-punch," it confided to the night and the moon. "Yes, two glasses; and a *belegtes Brodchen;* and a warm foot-bath. And then, bed!"

Not for him, at any rate, were the doubts and hopes that tangled in the Baron von Steinlach's massive head. A man with sore feet is prone to feel that the ground he stands on is at least solid. In his pleasant veranda next morning, with his coffee fragrant before him on the chequered table-cloth, he read in the *Bund* the British *communiqué* of the battle of the Somme—new villages taken, fortified woods stormed, prisoners multiplying, the whole monstrous structure of the German war-machine cracking and failing. While he read he ate and drank tranquilly; no thoughts of yesterday's business intruded upon his breakfast peace. He finished the *communiqué;* then:—

"Liars!" he commented, comfortably, reaching for his cup. "Those English are always liars!"

It was a good and easy day that thus opened. The answers to his telegrams did not begin to arrive till noon, and then they were only formulæ acknowledging receipt, which he did not need his code-book to decipher. With his black umbrella opened against the drive of the sun, he carried them at his leisure to the Baron, where he sat alone in his cool upper chamber working deliberately among his papers, received the customary ghost of a smile and the murmur, "*Der gute Haase,*" and got away. The slovenly porter, always with his look of having slept in his clothes, tried to engage him in talk upon the day's news. "You," said Herr Haase, stepping round him, "are one of those who believe anything; *schämen Sie sich!*" And so back to the comfortable villa on the hillside with its flaming geraniums and its atmosphere of that comfort and enduring respectability which stood to Herr Haase for the very inwardness of Germany. Yes, a good day!

It lasted as long as the daylight; the end of it found Herr Haase, his lamp alight, his back turned to the Alpine-glow on the mountains, largely at ease in his chair, awaiting the arrival of his *Dienstmâdchen* with the culminating coffee of the day. His yellow cigar was alight; he was fed and torpid; digestion and civilization were doing their best for him. As from an ambush there arrived the fat, yellow telegraph envelope.

"*Ach, was!*" protested Herr Haase. "And I thought it was the coffee you were bringing."

"*'S Kaffee kommt gleich,*" the stout, tow-haired girl assured him; but already he had torn open the envelope and was surveying its half-dozen sheets of code. Two hours of work with the key, at least; he groaned and hoisted himself from his chair.

"Bring the coffee to the office," he bade, and went to telephone a warning to the Baron.

The code was a cumbersome one; its single

good quality was that it passed unsuspected at a time when nervous telegraph departments were refusing all ciphers. It consisted of brief phrases and single words alternately; the single words—the code-book offered a selection of a couple of hundred of them—were meaningless, and employed solely to separate the phrases; and for half an hour Herr Haase's task was to separate this ballast from the cargo of the message and jettison it. There lay before him then a string of honest-looking mercantile phrases—"market unsettled," "collections difficult," and the like—which each signified a particular word. He sat back in his chair and took a preliminary glance at the thing.

It was a code he used frequently himself, and there were phrases in the message, two or three, which he knew by heart. As he scanned it it struck him that all of these were of the same character; they were words of deprecation or demur. "Existing rate of exchange" meant "regret"; "active selling" meant "impossible"; and "usual discount" was the code-form of "unfortunate." Herr Haase frowned and reached for his key.

Midnight was close at hand when he reached the Baron's room, with the telegram and his neatly-written interpretation in an envelope. He had changed his coat and shoes for the visit; it was the usual Herr Haase, softish of substance, solemn of attire, official of demeanour, who clicked and bowed to the Baron and Von Wetten in turn.

"Our good Haase," said the Baron. "At last!"

He wore a brown cloth dressing-gown with a cord about the middle; and somehow the garment, with its long skirts and its tied-in waist, looked like a woman's frock. With the white hair and the contained benevolence and power of his face it gave him the aspect of a distorted femininity, a womanhood unnatural and dire. Even Herr Haase perceived it, for he stared a moment open-mouthed before he recovered himself. Von Wetten, smoking in an easy chair, was in evening dress.

Herr Haase, with clockwork-like military motions, produced his envelope and held it forth.

"The code-telegram of which I telephoned your Excellency and a transcription of it," he announced.

Von Wetten took his cigar from his lips and held it between his fingers. The Baron waved the proffered envelope from him.

"Read it to us, my good Haase," he said.

"*Zu Befehl, Excellenz!*" Herr Haase produced from the envelope the crackling sheet of thin paper, held it up to the light, standing the while with heels together and chest out-thrust and read in the high barrack-square voice:—

"Herr Sigismund Haase, Friedrichsruhe, Thun-am-See, Switzerland. From Secret Service Administration, Berlin. July 21st, 1916. In reply to your code-message previously acknowledged, regret to report that officer you require was recently severely wounded. Hospital authorities report that it is impossible to move him. Trust this unfortunate event does not stultify your arrangements. Your further instructions awaited."

Herr Haase refolded the paper and returned it to the envelope and stood waiting.

It was Von Wetten who spoke first. "Thank God!" he said, loudly.

The old Baron, standing near him, hands joined behind his back, had listened to the reading with eyes on the floor. He shook his head now, gently, dissenting rather than contradicting.

"Oh, no," he said, slowly. "Don't be in a hurry to do that, Von Wetten."

"But, Excellency," Von Wetten protested, "I meant, of course——"

"I know," said the Baron. "I know what you thanked God for; and I tell you—don't be in too great a hurry."

He began to walk to and fro in the room. He let his hands fall to his sides; he was more than ever distortedly womanlike, almost visibly possessed and driven by his single purpose. Von Wetten, the extinct cigar still poised in his hand, watched him frowningly.

"Sometimes"—the Baron seemed to speak as often a man deep in thought will hum a tune—"sometimes I have felt before what I feel now—a current in the universe that sets against me, against Us. Something pulls the other way. It has all but daunted me once or twice."

He continued to pace to and fro, staring at the varnished floor.

"But, Excellency," urged Von Wetten, "there are still ways and means. If we can decoy this inventor-fellow across the frontier—and then, there is his wife! Pressure could be brought to bear through the woman. If we got hold of her, now!"

The Baron paused in his walk to hear him.

"And find an English army blasting its way through Belgium with that machine to come to her rescue? No," he said; and then, starting from his moody quiet to a sudden loudness: "No! We know his price—to lash this Von Specht across the face with a whip—and we have agreed to it. Let him lash him as he lies on a stretcher, if he likes! I know that type of scorched brain, simmering on the brink of madness. He'll do it, and he'll keep faith; and it'll be cheap at the price. Haase!"

He wheeled on Herr Haase suddenly.

"*Zu Befehl, Excellenz,*" replied Herr Haase.

The Baron stared at him for some moments, at the solid, capable, biddable creature he was, stable and passive in the jar of the overturned world. He pointed to the table.

"Sit there, my good Haase," he ordered. "I will dictate you a telegram. Not code this time—plain German!"

He resumed his to-and-fro walk while Herr Haase established himself.

"Direct it to our private address in the Wilhelmstrasse," he ordered. "Then write: 'You are to carry out orders previously communicated. Send Von Specht forthwith, avoiding all delay. Telegraph hour of his departure and keep me informed of his progress. No objections to this order are to be entertained.'"

"'Entertained,'" murmured Herr Haase, as he wrote the last word.

"Sign it as before," directed the Baron. "You see, Von Wetten, it *was* too soon!"

Von Wetten had not moved; he sat staring at the Baron. His hand twitched and the dead cigar fell to the floor.

"I don't care," he burst out. "It's wrong; it's not worth it—nothing could be. I'd be willing to go a long way—but a Prussian officer! It's—it's sacrilege. And a wounded man at that!"

The Baron did not smile, but mirth was in his face. "That was an afterthought, Von Wetten," he said—"the wounded man part of it." He turned to Herr Haase impatiently.

"Off with you!" he commanded. "Away, man, and get that message sent! Let me have the replies as they arrive. No, don't wait to bow and say good night; run, will you!"

His long arm, in the wide sleeve of the gown, leaped up, pointing to the door. Herr Haase ran.

Obediently as a machine, trotting flat-footed over the cobbles of the midnight streets, he ran, pulling up at moments to take his breath, then running on again. Panting, sweating, he lumbered up the steps of the telegraph office and thrust the message through the grille to the sleepy clerk.

"What is Von Specht?" grumbled the clerk. "Is this a cipher-message?"

"No," gasped Herr Haase. "Can't you read? This is plain German!"

Herr Haase, one has gathered, was not afflicted with that weakness of the sense which is called imagination. Not his to dream dreams and see visions; nor, while he tenderly undressed himself and put himself into his bed, to dwell in profitless fancy over the message he had sent, bursting like a shell among the departments and administrations which are the body of Germany's official soul. Nor later either, when the spate of replies kept him busy uncoding and carrying them down to the Baron, did he read into them more than the bare import of their wording. "Von Specht transferred to hospital-coach attached special train, accompanied military doctor and orderlies in civil clothes. Left Base Hospital No. 64 at 3.22 p.m. Condition weak, feverish," said the first of them. It did not suggest to him the hush of the white ward broken by the tread of the stalwart stretcher-bearers, the feeble groaning as they shifted the swathed and bandaged form from the bed to the stretcher, the face thin and haggard with yet a remains of sunburn on its bloodlessness, the progress to the railway, the grunt and heave of the men as they hoisted their burden to the waiting hospital-carriage. None of all that for Herr Haase.

Later came another message: "Patient very feverish. Continually inquires whither going and why. Please telegraph some answer to meet train at Bengen with which may quiet him." To that Herr Haase was ordered to reply: "Tell Colonel von Specht that he is serving his Fatherland," and that elicited another message from the train at Colmar: "Gave patient your message, to which he replied, 'That is good enough for me.' Is now less feverish, but very weak."

And finally, from Basle, came the news that the train and its passengers had crossed the frontier; Colonel von Specht was in Switzerland.

"You, my good Haase, will meet the train," said the Baron von Steinlach. "The Embassy has arranged to have it shunted to a siding outside the station. You will, of course, tell them nothing of what is in contemplation. Just inform whoever is in charge that I will come later. And, Von Wetten, I think we will send the car with a note to bring Herr Bettermann here at the same time."

"Here, Excellency?"

"Yes," said the Baron. "After all, we want to keep the thing as quiet as possible, and that fellow is capable of asking a party of friends to witness the ceremony." There was malicious amusement in the eye he turned on Von Wetten. "And we don't want that, do we?" he suggested.

Von Wetten shuddered.

The siding at which the special train finally came to rest was "outside the station" in the sense that it was a couple of miles short of it, to be reached by a track-side path complicated by piles of sleepers and cinder-heaps. Herr Haase, for the purpose of his mission, had attired himself sympathetically rather than conveniently; he was going to visit a Colonel and, in addition to other splendours, he had even risked again the patent leather boots. He was nearly an hour behind time when he reached at length the two *wagon-lits* carriages standing by themselves in a wilderness of tracks.

Limping, perspiring, purple in the face, he came alongside of them, peering up at their windows. A face showed at one of them, spectacled and bearded, gazing motionlessly through the panes with the effect of a sea-creature in an aquarium. It vanished and reappeared at the end door of the car.

"Hi! You—what do you want here?" called the owner of the face to Herr Haase.

Herr Haase came shuffling towards the steps.

"*Ich stelle Mich vor*—I introduce myself," he said, ceremoniously. "Haase—sent by his Excellency, the Herr Baron von Steinlach."

The other gazed down on him, a youngish man, golden-blond as to beard and hair, with wide, friendly eyes magnified by his glasses. He was coatless in the heat, and smoked a china-bowled German pipe like a man whose work is done and whose ease is earned; yet in his face and manner there was a trace of perturbation, an irritation of nervousness.

"Oh!" he said, and spoke his own name, "'Civil-doctor Fallwitz.' I've been expecting somebody. You'd better come inside, hadn't you?"

Outside was light and heat; inside was shadow and heat. Dr. Fallwitz led the way along the corridor of the car, with its gold-outlined scrollwork and many brass-gadgeted doors, to his own tiny compartment, smelling of hot upholstery and tobacco. Herr Haase removed his hat and sank puffing upon the green velvet cushions.

"You are hot—*nicht wahr?*" inquired Dr. Fallwitz, politely.

"Yes," said Herr Haase. "But, Herr Doktor—since you are so good—it is not only that. If—it is gross of me to ask it—but if I might take off my boots for some moments. You see, they are new."

"*Aber ich bitte,*" cried the doctor.

The doctor stood watching him while he struggled with the buttons, and while he watched he frowned and gnawed at the amber mouthpiece of his pipe. He waited till Herr Haase, with a loud, luxurious grunt, had drawn off the second boot.

"There will be a row, of course," he remarked then. "These Excellencies and people are only good for making rows. But I *told* them he couldn't be moved."

Herr Haase shifted his toes inside his socks. "You mean Colonel von Specht? But—isn't he here, then?"

The young doctor shook his head. "We obeyed orders," he said. "We had to. Those people think that life and death are subject to orders. I kept him going till we got here, but about an hour ago he had a hæmorrhage."

He put his pipe back into his mouth, inhaled and exhaled a cloud of smoke, and spoke again.

"Died before we could do anything," he said. "You see, after all he had been through, he hadn't much blood to spare. What did they want him here for, do you know?"

"No," said Herr Haase. "But I know the Herr Baron was needing him particularly. *Was fur eine Geschichte!*"

"Want to see him?" asked the young doctor.

It had happened to Herr Haase never to see a dead man before. Therefore, among the incidents of his career, he will not fail to remember that—the progress in his socks from the one car to the other, the atmosphere of the second car where the presence of death was heavy on the stagnant air, and the manner in which the thin white sheet outlined the shape beneath. A big young orderly in shabby civilian clothes was on guard; at the doctor's order he drew down the sheet and the dead man's face was bare. He who had slashed a helpless conscript across the face with a whip, for whom yet any service of his Fatherland was "good enough," showed to the shrinking Herr Haase only a thin, still countenance from whose features the eager passion and purpose had been wiped, leaving it resolute in peace alone.

"I—I didn't know they looked like that," whispered Herr Haase.

The two homeward miles of cindery path were difficult; the sun was tyrannous; his boots were a torment; yet Herr Haase went as in a dream. He had seen reality; the veil of his daily preoccupations had been rent for him; and it needed the impertinence of the ticket-collector at the door of the station, who was unwilling to let him out without a ticket, to restore him. That battle won, he found himself a cab, and rattled over the stones of Thun to the hotel door. He prepared no phrases in which to clothe his news; facts are facts and are to be stated as facts. What he murmured to himself as he jolted over the cobbles was quite another matter.

"Ticket, indeed!" he breathed, rancorously. "And I tipped him two marks only last Christmas!"

The Baron's car was waiting at the hotel door; the cab drew up behind it. The cabman, of course, wanted more than his due, and didn't get it; but the debate helped to take Herr Haase's mind still further off his feet. He entered the cool hall of the hotel triumphantly and made for the staircase.

"*O, mein Herr!*"

He turned; he had not seen the lady in the deep basket-chair just within the door, but now, as she rose and came towards him, he recognized her. It was the wife of Bettermann, the inventor, the shape upon the balcony of the châlet who had overlooked their experiments and overheard the bargain they had made.

Herr Haase bowed. "*Gnädige Frau?*"

He remembered her as little and pleasantly pretty; her presence above them on the balcony had touched his German sentimentalism. She was pretty now, with her softness and blossom-like fragility, but with it was a tensity, a sort of frightened desperation.

She hesitated for words, facing him with lips that trembled and large, painful eyes of nervousness. "He—he is here," she said, at last. "My husband—they sent a car to fetch him to them. He is up there now, with them!"

Herr Haase did not understand. "But yes, gracious lady," he answered. "Why not? The Herr Baron wished to speak to him."

She put out a small gloved hand uncertainly and touched his sleeve.

"No," she said. "Tell me! I—I am so afraid. That other, the officer who cut Egon's face—my husband's I mean—he has arrived? Tell me, *mein Herr!* Oh, I thought you would tell me; I saw you the other day, and those others never spoke to you, and you were the only one who looked kind and honest." She gulped and recovered. "He has arrived?"

"Well, now," began Herr Haase, paternally. In all his official life he had never "told" anything. Her small face, German to its very colouring, pretty and pleading, tore at him.

"Yes, he has arrived," he said, shortly. "I have—I have just seen him."

"Oh!" It was almost a cry. "Then—then they will do it? *Mein Herr, mein Herr,* help me! Egon, he has been thinking only of this for years; and now, if he does it, he will think of nothing

else all his life. And he mustn't—he mustn't! It's—it will be madness. I know him. *Mein Herr*, there is nobody else I can ask: help me!"

The small gloved hand was holding him now, holding by the sleeve of his superlative black coat of ceremony, plucking at it, striving to stir him to sympathy and understanding; the face, hopeful and afraid, strained up at him.

Gently he detached the gloved hand on his sleeve, holding it a second in his own before letting it go.

"Listen," he said. "That bargain is cancelled. Colonel von Specht died to-day."

He turned forthwith and walked to the stairs. He did not look back at her.

"*Herein!*" called somebody from within the white-painted door of the Baron's room, when he knocked.

Herr Haase, removing his hat, composing his face to a nullity of official expression, entered.

After the shadow of the hall and the staircase, the window blazed at him. The Baron was at his little table, seated sideways in his chair, toying with an ivory paper-knife, large against the light. Von Wetten stood beside him, tall and very stiff, withdrawn into himself behind his mask of Prussian officer and aristocrat; and in a low chair, back to the door and facing the other two, Bettermann sat.

He screwed round awkwardly to see who entered, showing his thin face and its scar, then turned back again to the Baron, large and calm and sufficient before him.

"I tell you," he said, resuming some talk that had been going on before Herr Haase's arrival: "I tell you—the letter of the bargain or nothing!"

The Baron had given to Herr Haase his usual welcome of a half-smile, satiric and not unkindly. He turned now to Bettermann.

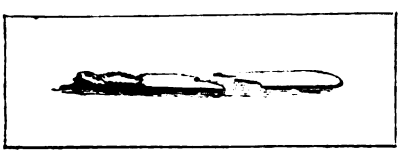
"But certainly," he answered. He slapped the ivory paper-knife against his palm. "I was not withdrawing from the bargain. I was merely endeavouring to point out to you at the instance of my friend here"—a jerk of the elbow towards Von Wetten—"the advantages of a million marks, or several million marks, plus the cashiering of Colonel von Specht from the army, over the personal satisfaction which you have demanded for yourself. But since you insist——"

Bettermann, doubled up in his low chair, broke in abruptly: "Yes, I insist!"

The Baron smiled his elderly, temperate smile. "So be it," he said. "Well, my good Haase, what have you to tell us?"

Herr Haase brought his heels together, dropped his thumbs to the seams of his best trousers, threw up his chin, and barked:—

"Your Excellency, I have seen the Herr Colonel Graf von Specht. He died at ten minutes past eleven this morning."



His parade-voice rang in the room; when it ceased the silence, for a space of moments, was absolute. What broke it was the voice of Von Wetten.

"Thank God!" it said, loudly and triumphantly.

The Baron swung round to him, but before he could speak Bettermann gathered up the slack of his long limbs and rose from his chair. He stood a moment, gaunt in his loose and worn clothes, impending over the seated Baron.

"So—that was it! Well——" He paused, surveying the pair of them, the old man, the initiate and communicant of the inmost heart of the machine through which his soul had gone like grain through a mill, and the tall Prussian officer, at once the motor and millstone of that machine. And he smiled. "Well," he repeated, "there's the end of that!"

The door closed behind him; his retreating footsteps echoed in the corridor. The Baron spoke at last. He stared up at Von Wetten, his strong old face seamed with new lines.

"You thank God for that, do you?" he said.

Von Wetten returned his gaze. "Yes, Excellency," he replied.

He had screwed his monocle into his eye; it gave to his unconscious arrogance the barb of impertinence.

"You!" The Baron cried out at him. "*You* thank God, do you?—and neither your thanks nor your God is worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier! Do you know what has happened, fool?"

Captain von Wetten bent towards him, smiling slightly.

"You are speaking to Haase, of course, Excellency?"

The Baron caught himself. His face went a trifle pinker, but his mouth was hard under the clipped white moustache and the heavy brows were level.

"I will tell you what has happened," he said, deliberately. "I will try to make it intelligible to you."

He held up the ivory paper-knife, its slender yellow blade strained in his two hands.

"That is Germany to-day," he said, "bending." His strong hands tightened; the paper-knife broke with a snap. "And that is Germany to-morrow—broken. We have failed."

He threw the two pieces from him to the floor and stared under the pent of his brows at Von Wetten.

Their eyes engaged. But one of the pieces slid across the floor to Herr Haase's feet. Orderly and serviceable always, Herr Haase bent and picked up the broken pieces and put them back upon the table.

Some Personalia About Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

AT the request of the Editor I have spent some days in looking over an old letter-box in which from time to time I have placed letters referring directly or indirectly to the notorious Mr. Holmes. I wish now that I had been more careful in preserving the references to this gentleman and his little problems. A great many have been lost or mislaid. His biographer has been fortunate enough to find readers in many lands, and the reading has elicited the same sort of response, though in many cases that response has been in a tongue difficult to comprehend. Very often my distant correspondent could neither spell my own name nor that of my imaginary hero, as in a recent instance which I here append. Many such letters have been from Russians. Where the Russian letters have been in the vernacular I have been compelled, I am afraid, to take them as read, but when they have been in English they have been among the most curious in my collection. There was one young lady who began all her epistles with the words "Good Lord." Another had a large amount of guile underlying her simplicity. Writing from Warsaw she stated that she had been bedridden for two years, and that my novels had been her only, etc., etc. So touched was I by this flattering statement that I at once prepared an autographed parcel of them to complete the fair invalid's collection. By good luck, however, I met a brother author upon the same day to whom I recounted the touching incident. With a cynical smile he drew an identical letter out of his pocket. His novels also had been for two years her only, etc., etc. I do not know how many more the lady had written to, but if, as I imagine, her correspondence had extended to several countries, she must have amassed a rather interesting library.

"VERY OFTEN MY DISTANT CORRESPONDENT COULD NEITHER SPELL MY OWN NAME NOR THAT OF MY IMAGINARY HERO."

The young Russian's habit of addressing me as "Good Lord" had an even stranger parallel at home, which links it up with the subject of this article. Shortly after I received a knighthood I had a bill from a tradesman which was quite correct and businesslike in every detail save that it was made out to Sir Sherlock Holmes. I hope that I can stand a joke as well as my neighbours, but this particular piece of humour seemed rather misapplied, and I wrote sharply upon the subject. In response to my letter

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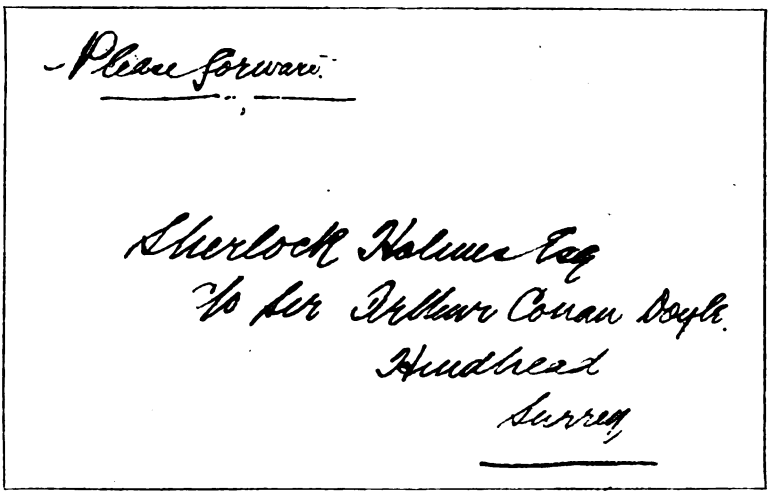
there arrived at my hotel a very repentant clerk, who expressed his sorrow at the incident, but kept on repeating the phrase, "I assure you, sir, that it was *bonâ fide*." "What do you mean by *bonâ fide?*" I asked. "Well, sir, my mates in the shop told me that you had been knighted, and that when a man was knighted he changed his name, and that you had taken that one." I need not say that my annoyance vanished, and that I laughed as heartily as his pals were probably doing round the corner.



MANY LETTERS ADDRESSED AS ABOVE SHOW WHAT AN ACTUAL LIVING PERSONALITY MR. HOLMES IS TO MANY PEOPLE.

There are certain problems which are continually recurring in these Sherlock Holmes letters. One of them has exercised men's minds in the most out-of-the-way places, from Labrador to Tibet; indeed, if a matter needs thought it is just the men in these outlying stations who have the time and solitude for it. I dare say I have had twenty letters upon the one point alone. It arises in "The Adventure of the Priory School," where Holmes, glancing at the track of a bicycle, says, "It is evidently going from us, not towards us." He did not give his reasoning, which my correspondents resent, and all assert that the deduction is impossible. As a matter of fact it is simple enough upon soft undulating ground such as the moor in question. The weight of the rider falls most upon the hind wheel, and in soft soil it makes a perceptibly deeper track. Where the machine goes up a slope this hind mark would be very much deeper; where it goes down at slope rapidly it would be hardly deeper at all. Thus the depth of the mark of the hind wheel would show which way the bike was travelling.

I never realized what an actual living personality Mr. Holmes was to many people until I heard the very pleasing story of the char-à-banc of French schoolboys on a tour to London, who, when asked what they wanted to see first, replied unanimously that they wanted to see Mr. Holmes's lodgings in Baker Street. Rather less pleasing, though flattering in their way, were the letters of abuse which showered upon me when it was thought that I had killed him. "You brute!" was the promising opening of one lady's epistle. The most trenchant criticism of the stories as a series came from a Cornish boatman, who remarked to me: "When Mr. Holmes had that fall he may not have been killed, but he was certainly injured, for he was never the same man afterwards." I hope the allegation is not true—and, indeed, those who have read the stories backward, from the latest to the first, assure me that it is not so—but it was a shrewd thrust none the less.

One of the quaintest proofs of his reality to many people is that I have frequently received autograph books by post, asking me to procure his signature. When it was announced that he was retiring from practice and intended to keep bees on the South Downs I had several letters offering to help him in his project. Two of them lie before me as I write. One says: "Will Mr. Sherlock Holmes require a housekeeper for his country cottage at Christmas? I know someone who loves a quiet country life, and bees especially—an

old-fashioned, quiet woman." The other, which is addressed to Holmes himself, says: "I see by some of the morning papers that you are about to retire and take up bee-keeping. If correct I shall be pleased to render you service by giving any advice you may require. I trust you will read this letter in the same spirit in which it is written, for I make this offer in return for many pleasant hours." Many other letters have reached me in which I have been implored to put my correspondents in touch with Mr. Holmes, in order that he might elucidate some point in their private affairs.

Occasionally I have been so far confused with my own character that I have been asked to take up professional work upon these lines. I had, I remember, one offer, in the case of an aristocratic murder trial in Poland some years ago, to go across and look into the matter upon my own terms. I need not say that I would not do such a thing for money, since I am diffident as to how far my own services would be of any value; but I have several times as an amateur been happy to have been of some assistance to people in distress. I can say, though I touch wood as I say it, that I have never entirely failed in any attempt which I have made to reduce Holmes's methods to practical use, save in one instance to which I allude later. For the case of Mr. Edalji I can claim little credit, for it did not take any elaborate deduction to come to the conclusion that a man who is practically blind did not make a journey at night which involved crossing a main line of railway, and would have tested a trained athlete had he been called upon to do it in the time. The man was obviously innocent, and it is a disgrace to this country that he has never received a penny of compensation for the three years which he spent in jail. A more complex case is that of Oscar Slater, who is still working out his sentence as a convict. I have examined the evidence carefully, including the supplementary evidence given at the very limited and unsatisfactory commission appointed to inquire into the matter, and I have not the faintest doubt that the man is innocent. When the judge asked him at the trial whether he had anything to say why the sentence of death for the murder of Miss Gilchrist should not be pronounced upon him, he cried aloud, "My Lord, I did not know there was such a woman in the world." I am convinced that this was the literal truth. However, it is proverbially impossible to prove a negative, so there the matter must stand until the people of Scotland insist upon a real investigation into all the circumstances which surround this deplorable case.

A few of the problems which have come my way have been very similar to some which I had invented for the exhibition of the reasoning of Mr. Holmes. I might perhaps quote one in which that gentleman's method of thought was copied with complete success. The case was as follows. A gentleman had disappeared. He had drawn a bank balance of forty pounds, which was known to be on him. It was feared that he had been murdered for the sake of the money. He had last been heard of stopping at a large hotel in London, having come from the country that day. In the evening he went to a music-hall performance, came out of it about ten o'clock, returned to his hotel, changed his evening clothes, which were found in his room next day, and disappeared utterly. No one saw him leave the hotel, but a man occupying a neighbouring room declared that he had heard him moving during the night. A week had elapsed at the time that I was consulted, but the police had discovered nothing. Where was the man?

These were the whole of the facts as communicated to me by his relatives in the country. Endeavouring to see the matter through the eyes of Mr. Holmes, I answered by return of post that he was evidently either in Glasgow or in Edinburgh. It proved later that he had as a fact gone to Edinburgh, though in the week that had passed he had moved to another part of Scotland.

There I should leave the matter, for, as Dr. Watson has often shown, a solution explained is a mystery spoiled. However, at this stage the reader can lay down the magazine and show how simple it all is by working out the problem for himself. He has all the data which were ever given to me. For the sake of those, however, who have no turn for such conundrums I will try to indicate the links which make the chain. The one advantage which I possessed was that I was familiar with the routine of London hotels—though, I fancy, it differs little from that of hotels elsewhere.

The first thing was to look at the facts and separate what was certain from what was conjecture. It was *all* certain except the statement of the person who heard the missing man in the night. How could he tell such a sound from any other sound in a large hotel? That point could be disregarded if it traversed the general conclusions. The first clear deduction was that the man had meant to disappear.

Why else should he draw all his money? He had got out of the hotel during the night. But there is a night-porter in all hotels, and it is impossible to get out without his knowledge when the door is once shut. The door is shut after the theatre-goers return—say at twelve o'clock. Therefore the man left the hotel before twelve o'clock. He had come from the music-hall at ten, had changed his clothes, and had departed with his bag. No one had seen him do so. The inference is that he had done it at the moment when the hall was full of the returning guests, which is from eleven to eleven-thirty. After that hour, even if the door were still open, there are few people coming and going; so that he with his bag would certainly have been seen.

Having got so far upon firm ground we now ask ourselves why a man who desires to hide himself should go out at such an hour. If he intended to conceal himself in London he need never have gone to the hotel at all. Clearly, then, he was going to catch a train which would carry him away. But a man who is deposited by a train in any provincial station during the night is likely to be noticed, and he might be sure that when the alarm was raised and his description given some guard or porter would remember him. Therefore his destination would be some large town, which he would reach in daylight hours, as a terminus, where all his fellow-passengers would disembark and where he would lose himself in the crowd. When one turns up the time-table and sees that the great Scotch expresses bound for Edinburgh and Glasgow start about midnight, the goal is reached. As for his dress-suit, the fact that he abandoned it proved that he intended to adopt a line of life where there were no social amenities. This deduction also proved to be correct.

I quote such a case in order to show that the general lines of reasoning advocated by Holmes have a real practical application to life. In another case where a girl had become engaged to a young foreigner who suddenly disappeared I was able by a similar process of deduction to show her very clearly both whither he had gone and how unworthy he was of her affections. On the other hand, these semi-scientific methods are occasionally laboured and slow as compared with the results of the rough-and-ready practical man. Lest I should seem to have been throwing bouquets either to myself or to Mr. Holmes, let me state that on the occasion of a burglary of the village inn, within a stone-throw of my house, the village constable, with no theories at all, had seized the culprit, while I had got no farther than that he was a left-handed man with nails in his boots.

The unusual or dramatic effects which lead to the invocation of Mr. Holmes in fiction are, of course, great aids to him in reaching a conclusion. It is the case where there is nothing to get hold of which is the deadly one. I heard of such a one in America which would certainly have presented a formidable problem. A gentleman of blameless life, starting off for a Sunday evening walk with his family, suddenly observed that he had forgotten his stick. He went back into the house, the door of which was still open, and he left his people waiting for him outside. He never reappeared, and from that day to this there has been no clue as to what befell him. This was certainly one of the strangest cases of which I have ever heard in real life.

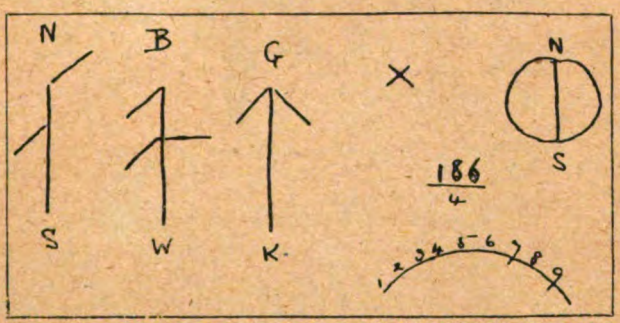
Another very singular case came within my own observation. It was sent to me by an eminent London publisher. This gentleman had in his employment a head of department whose name we shall take as Musgrave. He was a hard-working person with no special feature in his character. Mr. Musgrave died, and several years after his death a letter was received addressed to him, care of his employers. It bore the postmark of a tourist resort in the West of Canada, and had the note "Confl films" upon the outside of the envelope, with the words "Report Sy" in one corner. The publishers naturally opened the envelope, as they had no note of the dead man's relatives. Inside were two blank sheets of paper. The letter, I may add, was registered. The publisher, being unable to make anything of this, sent it on to me, and I submitted the blank sheets to every possible chemical and heat test, with no result whatever. Beyond the fact that the writing appeared to be that of a woman, there is nothing to add to this account. The matter was, and remains, an insoluble mystery. How the correspondent could have something so secret to say to Mr. Musgrave and yet not be aware that this person had been dead for several years is very hard to understand—or why blank sheets should be so carefully registered through the post. I may add that I did not trust the sheets to my own chemical tests, but had the best expert advice, without getting any result. Considered as a case it was a failure—and a very tantalizing one.

Mr. Sherlock Holmes has always been a fair mark for practical jokers, and I have had numerous bogus cases of various degrees of ingenuity, marked cards, mysterious warnings,

cipher messages, and other curious communications. Upon one occasion, as I was entering the hall to take part in an amateur billiard competition, I was handed a small packet which had been left for me. Upon opening it I found a piece of ordinary green chalk such as is used in billiards. I was amused by the incident, and I put the chalk into my waistcoat pocket and used it during the game. Afterwards I continued to use it until one day, some months later, as I rubbed the tip of my cue, the face of the chalk crumpled in, and I found it was hollow. From the recess thus exposed I drew out a small slip of paper with the words, "From Arsène Lupin to Sherlock Holmes." Imagine the state of mind of the joker who took such trouble to accomplish such a result!

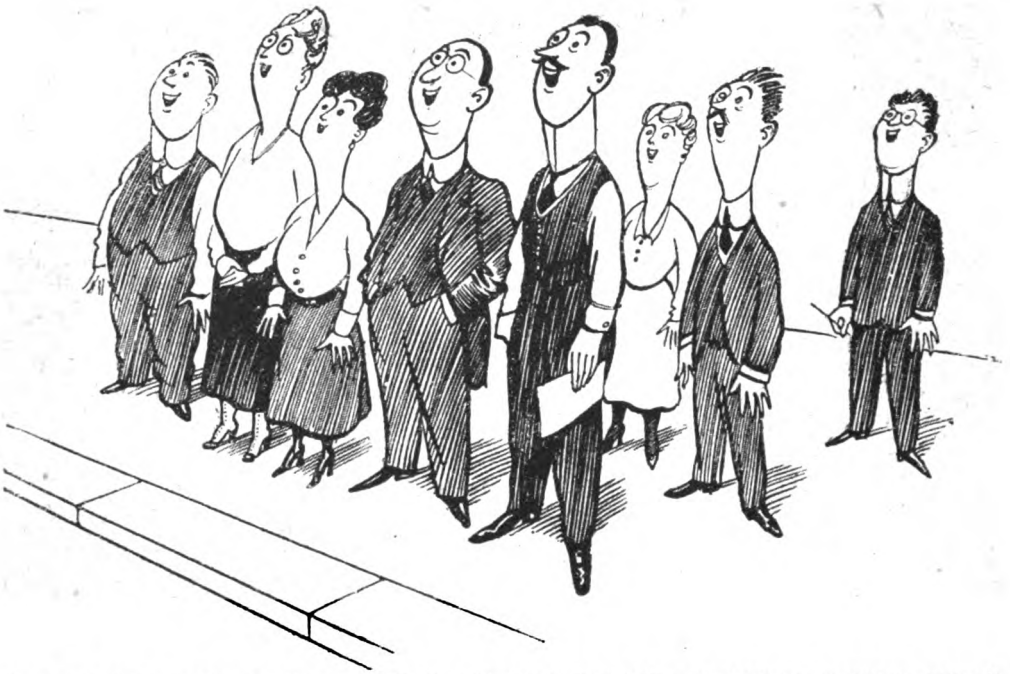
One of the mysteries submitted to Mr. Holmes was rather upon the psychic plane, and therefore beyond his powers. The facts as alleged are most remarkable, though I have no proof of their truth save that the lady wrote earnestly and gave both her name and address. The person, whom we will call Mrs. Seagrave, had been given a curious second-hand ring, snake-shaped, and of dull gold. This she took from her finger at night. One night she slept in it, and had a fearsome dream in which she seemed to be pushing off some furious creature which fastened its teeth into her arm. On awakening the pain in the arm continued, and next day the imprint of a double set of teeth appeared upon the arm, with one tooth of the lower jaw missing. The marks were in the shape of blue-black bruises which had not broken the skin. "I do not know," says my correspondent, "what made me think the ring had anything to do with the matter, but I took a dislike to the thing and did not wear it for some months, when, being on a visit, I took to wearing it again." To make a long story short, the same thing happened, and the lady settled the matter for ever by dropping her ring into the hottest corner of the kitchen-range. This curious story, which I believe to be genuine, may not be as supernatural as it seems. It is well known that in some subjects a strong mental impression does produce a physical effect. Thus a very vivid nightmare-dream with the impression of a bite might conceivably produce the mark of a bite. Such cases are well attested in medical annals. The second incident would, of course, arise by unconscious suggestion from the first. None the less, it is a very interesting little problem, whether psychic or material.

Buried treasures are naturally among the problems which have come to Mr. Holmes. One genuine case was accompanied by the diagram here reproduced. It refers to an Indiaman which was wrecked upon the South African coast in the year 1782. If I were a younger man I should be seriously inclined to go personally and look into that matter. The ship contained a remarkable treasure, including, I believe, the old crown regalia of Delhi. It is surmised that they buried these near the coast and that this chart is a note of the spot. Each Indiaman in those days had its own semaphore code, and it is conjectured that the three marks upon the left are signals from a three-armed semaphore. Some record of their meaning might perhaps even now be found in the old papers of the India Office. The circle upon the right gives the compass bearings. The larger semicircle may be the curved edge of a reef or of a rock. The figures above are the indications how to reach the X which marks the treasure. Possibly they may give the bearings as 186 feet from the 4 upon the semicircle. The scene of the wreck is a lonely part of the country, but I shall be surprised if sooner or later someone does not seriously set to work to solve the mystery.



THE ABOVE DIAGRAM ACCOMPANIED A BURIED TREASURE PROBLEM WHICH WAS SENT TO SHERLOCK HOLMES. CAN YOU SOLVE IT?

One last word before I close these jottings about my imaginary character. It is not given to every man to see the child of his brain endowed with life through the genius of a great sympathetic artist, but that was my good fortune when Mr. Gillette turned his mind and his great talents to putting Holmes upon the stage. I cannot end my remarks more fittingly than by my thanks to the man who changed a creature of thin air into an absolutely convincing human being.



"ALL MY CLERKS RUSHED OUT INTO THE STREET, AND I COULDN'T GET THEM BACK UNDER COVER."

The LATEST RAID.

By STEPHEN McKENNA.

Illustrated by H. M. Bateman.

THE inscription on the visiting-card was :—

MR. JAMES LOGAN-ATLAY.

HOME OFFICE
(Air-Raid Precaution Department),
S.W.

William Bellamy, senior partner in Bellamy Brothers, bankers and merchants, sighed as he looked at it. The day was oppressively hot, he was working short-handed, and three years of war and two generations of peace had implanted in his breast a distrust of Government officials. Always they called without appointment, usually as avengers of blood; at one time the Commissioners of Inland Revenue failed to understand his returns, at another there was an overdue insurance-card to be explained. Lately he had been worried with requests for particulars of all men of military age (with their classification) in his employment, and there was the abiding problem of his pre-war average of profits. On the other hand, he prided himself on being a good citizen and on helping the Government in its troublous task.

"I will see him at once," he told the commissionaire, glancing resignedly at the presentation silver clock on the mantelpiece and pulling a coat over his shirt-sleeves.

Mr. Logan-Atlay, to do him justice, showed himself sensible of the disturbance which he was causing and went straight to business.

"I don't want to take an unnecessary moment of your time," he explained, briskly, in a tone refreshingly unlike the languid university drawl to which Mr. Bellamy had grown painfully accustomed. "As you have

the best reason for knowing, the last two raids have hit offices in this street, and there's been a pretty fair outcry in the Press. It isn't my job," he added, departmentally, mopping his forehead and fanning himself with his hat, " to keep Hun aircraft away, but the Home Office has to see that all precautions are taken to reduce the risk to life. Now, may I ask what kind of air-raid drill you have instituted here ? "

Mr. Bellamy became apologetically candid in tone.

" To tell you the truth," he said, " we haven't done much. In the last raid—it was a beautiful sight, you remember—all my clerks rushed out into the street, and I couldn't get them back under cover. My three partners were out there, too, and that rather cut the ground from under my feet."

The Home Office representative nodded his regretful agreement.

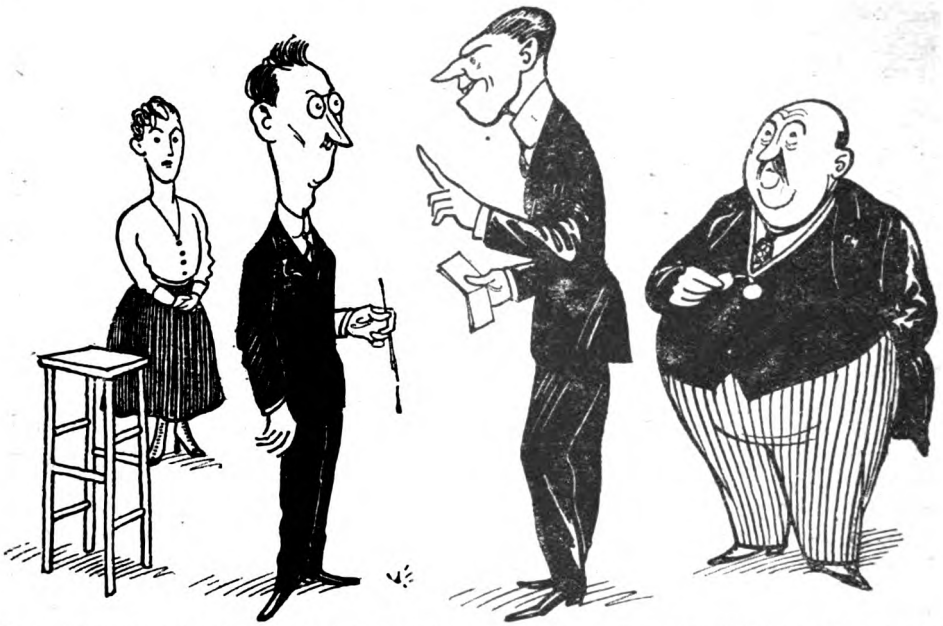
" That's the devil of it," he said, " saving people against their will. It can't go on, though. If a bomb had dropped in the street by your front door every man and woman would have been blown to bits ; you, if you'd survived, would have been mercilessly attacked for not making better arrangements, you might have had to pay crippling compensation, and of course the poor Home Office would have been put in the pillory. Now, if you have organized no air-raid drill, perhaps you will allow me to show you the approved Home Office scheme ; and first of all I will ask to see the general disposition of your office."

For half an hour Mr. Logan-Atlay was conducted through the various departments of the building. He counted stairs, measured doorways, tested the speed of the lift, and noted the numbers in each room, methodically entering everything in a small pocket-book. Mr. Bellamy, panting and perspiring, led him from the typists' room at the top, through the bookkeeping department, the partners' private rooms, the public office, the storerooms, and rather pretentious marble hall to the strong-rooms in the basement. Then they returned, and after an interval of silent calculations Mr. Logan-Atlay asked to see Mr. Bellamy's colleagues and the heads of departments.

His scheme, when he unfolded it, was simple enough. On receiving intimation of a raid the Avenue Exchange would ring up Bellamy's private exchange ; the operator would telephone to each department in turn, and on hearing the words " Air-raid warning " every man and woman would cease work and repair quietly but instantly to one or other of the vaults under the building.

Mr. Bellamy revised his harsh opinion of Government officials when he saw Mr. Logan-Atlay's laborious care in explaining his individual duty to each clerk, allocating the vaults and making equal use of east and

" METHODICALLY ENTERING EVERYTHING IN A SMALL POCKET-BOOK."



"MR. BELLAMY REVISED HIS HARSH OPINION OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHEN HE SAW MR. LOGAN-ATLAY'S LABORIOUS CARE IN EXPLAINING HIS INDIVIDUAL DUTY TO EACH CLERK."

west staircase, as well as of the outside fire-escape. Not a thing was left to chance, and everyone was forced to repeat the orders until they were had by heart.

"Before leaving her seat," concluded Mr. Logan-Atlay, "the telephone operator will connect through with the vaults, so that the Avenue Exchange may report when the raid is over, and everyone can return to work. Now, Mr. Bellamy, you must be sick and tired of me by this time, but, if you'll have one dress rehearsal, I'll promise to leave you in peace for the duration of the war."

So much of the morning had already been consumed that no work worth mentioning was likely to be done till afternoon. Mr. Bellamy looked not far removed from heat-apoplexy, and his junior partners were growing mutinous, but it was no small thing to purchase immunity by a single sacrifice.

"All right," he said. "Everybody go back to work, and in five minutes' time we'll have the alarm."

Mr. Logan-Atlay conducted the dress rehearsal and took it by numbers. As "Air-raid warning" was called in each department, everyone took up his appointed station; on the words "Take cover" they proceeded downstairs. For all the careful coaching, one of the typists fainted, three ran to the wrong staircase, and six scurried to the cloak-room for their hats and handbags. Mr. Logan-Atlay shook his head with infinite good-humour.

"Oh, we must do better than this," he said. "Remember you're all working quite quietly; you hear the warning from your chief; I want you instinctively—*instinctively*—to walk without any excitement to your appropriate station. Never mind if you're in the middle of a word, never mind what you're doing, just *go*. You have only a few minutes' grace and you mustn't waste it on non-essentials."

He walked through one department after another, repeating his homily until it was reasonable to hope that no mistake could be made by anyone. Then he called in at Mr. Bellamy's room and asked to have the alarm given. This time the rehearsal did credit to his efforts. The clerks in each room rose to their feet as one man, assembled hatless and—as to many of them—in shirt-sleeves on the landing, and walked sedately downstairs; the "breakdown gang," as Mr. Logan-Atlay called the head and deputy head of each department, waited till last, in case anyone fainted; messengers in the corridors, lift, or stairs quietly directed their steps to the vaults; and even the partners, self-conscious and inwardly rebellious, proceeded obediently to a reserved cellar.

"To test the thing properly," called Mr. Logan-Atlay, "you ought to stay down there

for about twenty minutes, to see whether the ventilation's all right. I'll be merciful with you, though, and, if you'll just give me time to see that no one's been left behind, I'll ring down the 'Raid over' call."

In discomfort, heat, and semi-darkness the partners listened to the patter of the Home Office representative's footsteps as he ran up the spiral iron staircase. Overhead murmured the distant rumble of traffic, and from the adjoining vault came the sound of simple pleasantries and ill-suppressed giggling.

"He's the devil of a while over his job, father!" grumbled young Mr. William Bellamy. "What's the time? I want my lunch."

"I left my watch upstairs," answered his father. "We'll give him a few minutes more."

After a further period of waiting the junior partner strolled into the passage and shouted to Mr. Logan-Atlay by name. There was no answer, and partners and staff muttered impatiently below their breath.

"I expect somebody's fainted and been overlooked," suggested the head bookkeeper.

"Perhaps there's a real raid on," said the junior partner.

Young Mr. William Bellamy threw open the door and advanced into the passage.

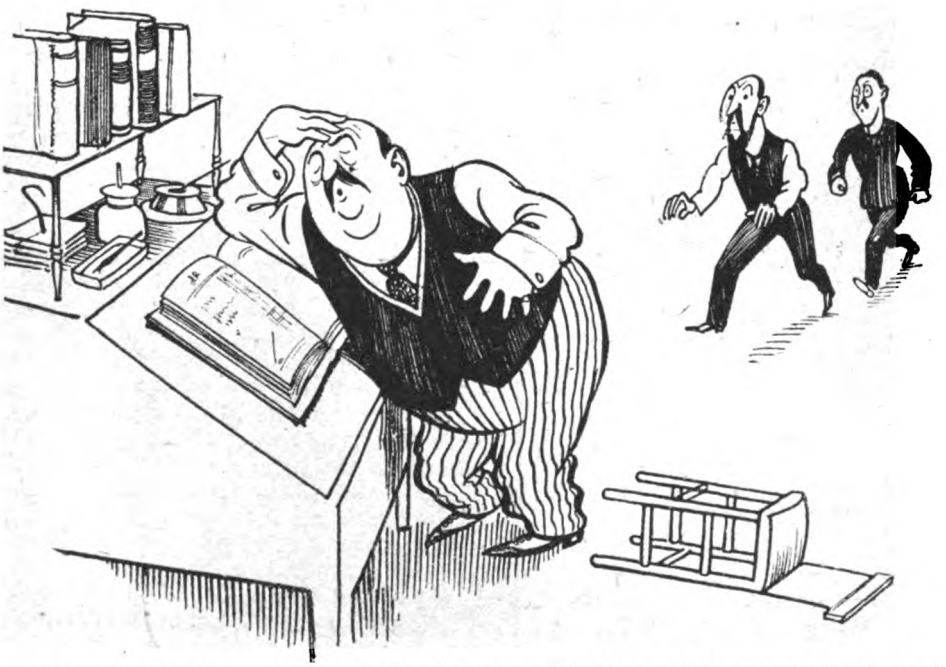
"I don't care a hang *what's* happened!" he exclaimed. "I'm going out to lunch."

After a moment of indecision his father ordered the staff to return to their places, and led the way upstairs. He, too, was tired and hungry, and, on entering his room, his eye turned instinctively to the mantelpiece. The presentation silver clock had disappeared. With a sinking heart he hurried to the peg from which his coat and waistcoat were hanging; obedient to instructions, he had not attempted to put them on when the alarm was given. A gold hunter watch, chain, and sovereign purse, a silver cigar-case, and a pocket-book filled with notes had been taken. Running as fast as his great bulk would allow, he burst open the cashier's door, to find that the cashier, also obedient to Mr. Logan-Atlay's instructions, had taken up his raid station without waiting to lock his drawers. Someone—presumably Mr. Logan-Atlay himself—had now made the locking of the drawers a superfluity.

"Willy!" shouted Mr. Bellamy. "Willy! Here! Quick!" Then he sank down on to the cashier's desk.

Young Mr. William Bellamy and the junior partner ran along the passage at sound of his voice.

"What's wrong?" they cried together, as they saw the old man's bent figure and listened for a moment to his heavy, painful breathing. "There's not been a raid after all, has there?"



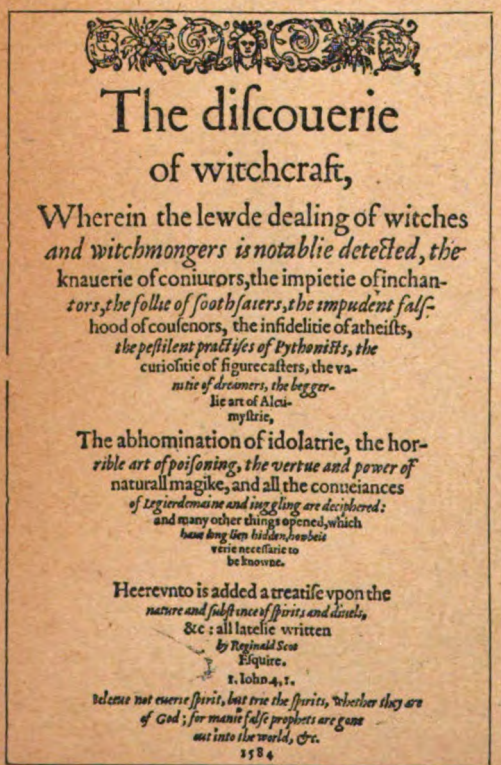
"'WILLY!' SHOUTED MR. BELLAMY. 'WILLY! HERE! QUICK!' THEN HE SANK DOWN ON TO THE CASHIER'S DESK."

THE FIRST BOOKS ON CONJURING.

By DAVID DEVANT.

THE first book on conjuring does not now exist, and nothing is known about it. I make that statement without fear of contradiction; indeed, I shall be delighted if someone will contradict me and produce his proof that I am wrong, for I should like to read the book.

Here are my reasons for thinking that the first book on conjuring is lost. The earliest known book dealing with the subject is dated 1584. Only thirty-six pages of the whole book—and four of those are filled with illustrations—are given up to descriptions of conjuring tricks. It is not reasonable to suppose that the author relied entirely on his own knowledge for the material for those thirty-six pages. The author was not a professional conjurer. Besides, he acknowledges that he made use of earlier works by "furren" and English authors in writing his book, and he probably drew on some of them for the conjuring portion of it.



The discouerie
of witchcraft,

Wherein the lewde dealing of witches *and witchmongers is notablie detected, the* knauerie of coniurors, the impietie of inchan*tors, the follie of soothsaiers, the impudent falsi*hood of cousenors, the infidelitie of atheists, *the pestilent practises of Pythonists, the* curiositie of figurecasters, the va*nitie of dreamers, the beggerlie art of Alchymistrie,*

The abhomination of idolatrie, the hor*rible art of poisoning, the vertue and power of* naturall magike, and all the conueiances *of legierdemaine and iuggling are deciphered:* and many other things opened, which *haue long lien hidden, howbeit verie necessarie to be knowne.*

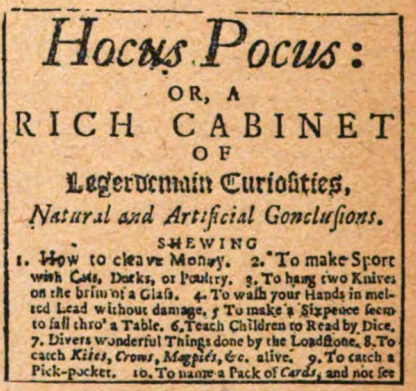
Heerevnto is added a treatise vpon the *nature and substances of spirits and diuels,* &c: all latelie written *by Reginald Scot* Esquire.

1. Iohn. 4. 1.

Beleeue not euerie spirit, but trie the spirits, whether they are of God; for manie false prophets are gone out into the world, &c.

1584

(1) TITLE PAGE OF EARLIEST KNOWN BOOK WHICH TREATS OF CONJURING—1584.



Hocus Pocus:

OR, A

RICH CABINET

OF

Legerdemain Curiosities,

Natural and Artificial Conclusions.

SHEWING

1. How to cleave Money. 2. To make Sport with Cats, Ducks, or Poultry. 3. To hang two Knives on the brim of a Glass. 4. To wash your Hands in melted Lead without damage. 5 To make a Sixpence seem to fall thro' a Table. 6. Teach Children to Read by Dice. 7. Divers wonderful Things done by the Loadstone. 8. To catch *Kites, Crows, Magpies,* &c. alive. 9. To catch a Pick-pocket. 10. To name a Pack of *Cards*, and not see

(2) FROM THE FIRST COMPLETE BOOK ON CONJURING—(1630).

The title of this work is "The Discovery of Witchcraft," and the author is one Reginald Scot. The general scheme of his book is sufficiently explained on the title page, a photograph of which is here reproduced (1). The "knaverie of conjurors" seems a little unkind nowadays, and I am rather glad that I was not alive when that book was written.

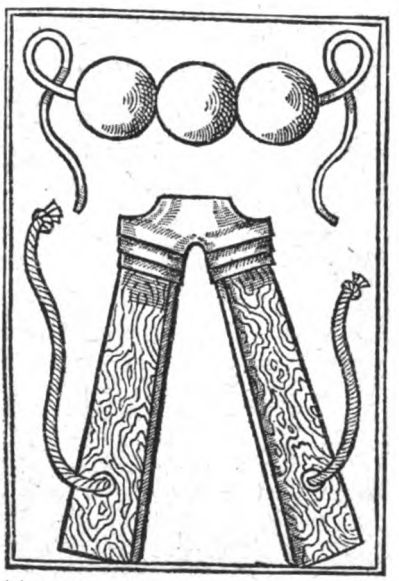
King James I. had views of his own on the subject of witchcraft, and ordered all copies of the first edition of this book to be burned by the common hangman. This accounts for the rarity of the book, but a few copies are still in existence. The British Museum has two copies of the first edition, and I am indebted to the authorities for permission to have photographs made of the better one of the two; the other is not quite perfect. There is also a copy in the Middle Temple Library, and a few collectors probably hug copies; one was sold by Messrs. Sotheby last year for thirty-six pounds.

The second edition of "The Discovery of Witchcraft" was published in 1651, fifty-two years after the author's death. The third edition was published fourteen years later. These editions are not so rare as the first,

which formed the basis of all books on conjuring for some two hundred years. Other authors lifted whole pages from Scot's work without troubling to alter anything.

In 1630 there appeared a little book called "Hocus Pocus, or a Rich Cabinet of Legerdemain Curiosities" (2), made up almost entirely of selections from Scot's book. A copy of a later edition of "Hocus Pocus," published in 1718, is in the library of the Magic Circle, the society of conjurers, who kindly permitted me to use it.

But let us go to the fountain-head of all magical wisdom and see what there is to learn about conjuring. I confess I was amazed when I first dipped into "The Discovery of Witchcraft," dated 1584, to find pictures of tricks which are sold in conjuring shops to this day. One of these tricks consists in removing three large beads from two pieces of string (3).



(3) A POPULAR TRICK WITH CONJURERS TO-DAY DATES BACK TO THE TIME OF SHAKESPEARE.

I do not propose to tell you how it is done, for the secret is so good that the trick ought never to be sold in shops at the current price, which is, I believe, sixpence - halfpenny. In another form this trick has long been the favourite with itinerant conjurers, but they do not use pieces of string and beads; they use—— But I am getting away from the book.

The author leads off with a kind of apology for giving away secrets "to the hinderance of such poore men as live thereby." We are told that "legierdemaine is especiallie performed three waies. The first and principall consisteth in hiding and conveieng of balles, the second in the alteration of monie, the third in the shuffeling of cards."

A word as to the "shuffeling of cards." The method here described is practically the same as that which was regarded by all conjurers in this country as a great novelty a few years ago. This method of shuffling the cards was described in an American book written by a man who knew all that is worth knowing about card-sharping. It will be news to most conjurers that this method of "shuffeling" is well over three hundred years old; it must have been rather difficult with the cards of the sixteenth century.

Some of the best little dodges known to conjurers are explained in this book, but I doubt if anyone could learn one sleight-of-hand trick from the author's description; indeed, he admits that to teach a trick on paper is not easy. "These things," says the author, "without exercise cannot be doone."

But simple tricks can be learned from this book, especially if the magician will "worke by private confederacie," as the author has it. Here is one. You get a shilling, "or anie other thing," mark it, and throw it into a pond or river, "having hid a shilling before with like marks in some other secret place; bid some go presentlie and fetch it, making them beleeve that it is the verie same which you threw into the river; the beholders will marvell much at it. And of such feats there may be doone a marvellous number; but manie more by publike confederacie, whereby one may tell another how much monie he hath in his pursse, and a hundreth like toies, and all with monie."

I refuse to believe that any modern "beholder" would "marvell" at such a trick. You will notice that the author does not say that that is the way the conjurers of the day did the trick; I imagine that the "poore men" must have used a method which did not involve the loss of a good shilling at every performance.

Sixteenth-century magicians evidently liked a little humour in their performances, but I cannot advise any modern conjurer, amateur or professional, to copy this little diversion:—

How to Rap a Wag on the Knuckles.

"Deliver one peece of monie with the left hand to one, and to a second person another, and offer him that you would rap on the fingers the third; for he (though he be ungratious and subtill), seeing the other receive monie, will not lightlie refuse it: and when he offereth to take it, you may rap him on the fingers with a knife, or somewhat else held in the right hand, saieng that you knew

by your familiar that he ment to have kept it from you."

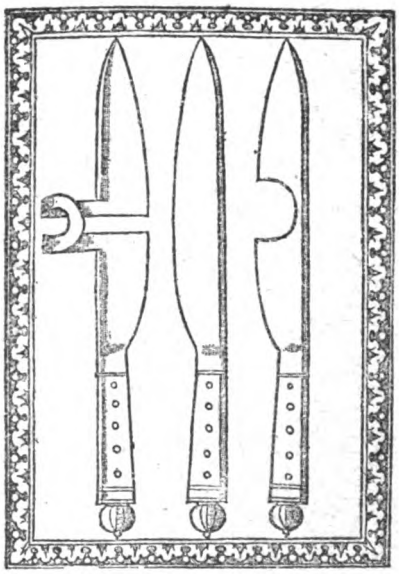
I think that the third man would have every reason to be both "ungratious and subtill" after such treatment.

Here is a little trick which I have tried myself six times with six different friends, and it has not come off once; but possibly others may be more fortunate :—

"Laie three cards on a table, a little waie distant, and bid a stander by be true and not waver, but thinke one of them three, and by his eie you shall assuredlie perceive which he both seeth and thinketh."

There must be something wrong with that, for although I have entreated each one of my six victims to be "true and not waver," they have all refused to look harder at one card than at the other two; and without that delicate consideration for the conjurer the trick seems to me impossible.

The following little gem of a trick may be useful to an amateur; I know of no professional who dare try it. The first part is simple. You get a nut, bore a small hole in it, remove the edible portion, and fill up the shell with a piece of paper on which you have written the name of a card. Then you get some obliging person to take a card, and, of course, the card he takes is the card you have described on the paper inside the nut. So far so good; but now for the second part of the trick.



(4) TRICK KNIVES. "LAIE IT UPON YOUR NOSE, AND SO SHALL YOU SEEME TO HAVE CUT YOUR NOSE HALFE ASUNDER."

You have another nut also hollowed out, but filled with ink. You offer to do the trick again, and you reach the climax when your victim puts the nut in his mouth and cracks it. The author does not tell us what to do then, but I should advise any amateur who is thinking of doing the trick to make sure that the exit door is open.

Another trick is how to make a hard knot in a handkerchief and to "undoo the same with words"—an excellent trick, and one performed by conjurers to this day.

The next one is easy, but I shall not do it. You have a bodkin with a hollow handle and pretend to bore a hole in your forehead. To complete the deception you also have a little sponge, so that "you may wring out bloud or wine." Afterwards you exchange the trick bodkin for another "like the same, saving in that conceipt" (the hollow handle). Another bodkin is for boring a hole in your tongue—"a pittiful sight," says the author; and I agree. "Also the verie like may be doone with a knife so made, and put upon your arme: and the wound will appeare the more terrible if a little bloud be powred thereupon." They were nothing if not thorough in those days; the modern conjurer would prefer to take the blood for granted.

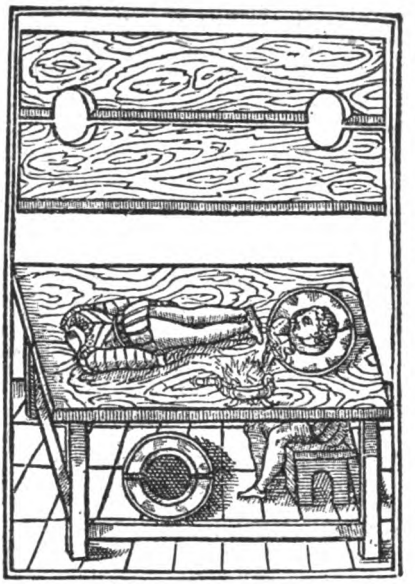
Consideration for youthful amateurs prevents me from describing the method of the next trick: "To thrust a peece of lead into one eie, and to drive it about (with a sticke) betweene the skin and flesh of the forehead, untill it be brought to the other eie, and there thrust out." The trick is interesting in that it gives the first description of a real magic wand.

This is less dangerous and quite as unpleasant: "To cut halfe your nose asunder, and to heale it againe presentlie without anie salve. Take a knife having a round hollow gap in the middle, and laie it upon your nose, and so shall you seeme to have cut your nose halfe asunder. Provided alwaies, that in all these you have an other like knife without a gap, to be shewed upon the pulling out of the same, and words of inchantment to speake, bloud also to beeraie the wounde, and nimble conveiance." The trick knife is illustrated (4).

A rough definition of an illusion is a trick in which a human being is used, and here we have a description of the first known illusion: "To cut off one's head, and to laie it in a platter, etc., which the jugglers call the decollation of John Baptist." The author tells us that "This was doone by one Kingsfield of London, at a Bartholomewtide, An. 1582, in the sight of diverse that came to view this spectacle."

The illustration explains the illusion pretty

well (5). You will observe that the conjurer has two assistants exactly alike. The one who is to be executed lies on the table, and, at the critical moment, puts his head through a hole in the table. The other assistant, sitting under the table, pops up his head—also at the critical moment. The table was covered with a long cloth. The author instructs us: "Then (to make the sight more dredfull) put a little brimstone into a chafing dish of coles, setting it before the head of the boie, who must gaspe two or three times, so as the smoke enter a little into his nostrils and mouth (which is not unholsome) and the head will presentlie appear starke dead; if the boie set his countenance accordinglie: and if a little bloud be sprinkled on his face, the sight will be the stranger."



(5) THE FIRST KNOWN ILLUSION: "TO CUT OFF ONE'S HEAD, AND TO LAIE IT IN A PLATTER."

It seems incredible that any conjurer could have made a mistake with the next trick, but——

"An other miracle may be shewed touching counterfet executions; namelie, that with a bodkin or a dagger you shall seeme to kill your selfe, or at the least make an unrecoverable wound in your bellie: as (in truth) not long since a juggler caused himself to be killed at a taverne in cheapside, from whence he presentlie went into Powles churchyard and died. Which misfortune fell upon him through his owne follie, as being then drunken, and having forgotten his plate, which he should have had for his defense."

The "plate" was made up of a piece of "paste boord" which had to be "coloured cunninglie" to resemble the body, and under it was another plate—presumably metal. We are told that it was this part of the apparatus "which the juggler that killed himselfe forgot, or wilfullie omitted." He must have been a very bad conjurer or else very drunk. In case anyone wants to try this I should add that a bladder of the "bloud" of a "calfe or of a sheepe" is another part of the apparatus—"in no wise of an oxe or a cow, for that will be too thicke." Also, "you must ever remember to use (with words, countenance, and gesture) such a grace, as may give a grace to the action, and moove admiration in the beholders."

(6) A BALANCING TRICK. THE ILLUSTRATION IS LAUGHABLY IMPOSSIBLE.

The less dangerous trick of apparently drawing a string through the nose is also described and illustrated. The trick is still sold in conjuring shops and is known to most schoolboys.

Lastly, we have the first mention of an amateur conjurer. The author says, in effect: If you do not believe that all these tricks are done in the way I say they are done then:—

"Go into S. Martins and inquire for one John Cautares (a French man by birth, in conversation an honest man), and he will shew as much and as strange actions as these, who getteth not his living hereby, but laboureth for the same with the sweat of his browes, and neverthelesse hath the best hand and conveiance (I thinke) of anie man that liveth this daie."

The "Hocus Pocus" book leads off with a trick which is not a conjuring trick. You lay a coin on three pins stuck into the table, put some powdered brimstone on the coin, and set fire to the brimstone. When the fire is out the edges of the coin will part and the coin can be slit with a knife. There is no harm in describing the feat, for I do not think it can be done with any coin of to-day.

A little balancing feat with a piece of stick, two knives, and a glass is illustrated (6). I am quite sure that the artist never tried the trick, for it cannot be done in this way; the centre of gravity is in the wrong place. But a trick which can be done is that of naming all the cards in the pack without seeing them.

To do this you require to have a drop of water on the table—(the author says "or drink")—and a lighted candle

(7) THE CONJURER IS SUPPOSED TO BE LOOKING AT A CARD REFLECTED IN A DROP OF WATER!

near it (7). Then you hold the cards above the head and see the reflection of the bottom card in the drop of water. The card shown on the table in the picture is supposed to be the card reflected in the spot of water, and here again you will see that the artist made a mistake, for it is not the bottom card of the pack.

To catch fish on a dark night with a candle under water is not a conjuring trick. The illustration shows the kind of apparatus which is to be used (8). The author says that the fish will "straight resort to the same, where you may very easily take them with a net." I have not tried it.

(8) TO CATCH FISH IN THE DARK.

To tell the time by using a ring and a glass sounds interesting. You pass a piece of thread through a ring and tie the two ends together. Then "hold the knot of the thread something hard betwixt the ends of your forefinger and your thumb, as you see here in the figure (9), which will cause the pulses of your wrist to beat." In this way the ring, hanging inside the glass, is made to move, and we are told that when the ring has struck against the sides of the glass and has thus told the time of the day or night it will stand still again. I have my doubts.

Many of the things in this book are not conjuring tricks. The following seems to be the ancestor of the modern shrapnel:—

"If that the enemy will enter (and that you intend not to yield) it is necessary to have in readiness divers hollow bullets, made of two plates of iron, or other metal, so that the one may close about the other round like a box, which being filled with pebble stones, square pieces of iron called dice shot, musket bullets, or the like, which being discharg'd out of a murdering Piece, it will do great execution: if you will fill cases of wood, made like unto a Lanthorn, with the same stuff, it will perform the like service, being shot out of a Murdering Piece: Behold both the figures marked with the Letter A aforegoing" (10).

(9) TO TELL THE TIME WITH A RING AND A GLASS.

The author, J. White, seems rather at a loss to know how to fill up his little book, for side by side with descriptions of conjuring tricks we have recipes to drive away mice, to make hair grow quickly, to whiten teeth, and "to help the raging pain of the teeth without drawing." Some of these recipes are even more wonderful than the tricks.

(10) A FORERUNNER OF SHRAPNEL.

When my hair gets thin I am going to try this: "Take the juice of nettles that grow in the sun-rising, moisten your comb teeth with it, and every morning comb the hair upward."

I shall not try the recipe for toothache, for you have to begin, according to this authority, by pouring spirits of wine into the ears, "especially on that side where your pain lieth."

Jackie Play-Alone.

By ROLAND PERTWEE.

Illustrated by Stanley Davis.

I.

SHE is a horrid little thing, a nasty horrid little girl. All girls are silly and horrid, but she's the horridest, without being silly. She spoils all my games, and when I stare at her and make a frown—and I tell you I can frown when I do—yes, with two lines in my forehead like a cross grown-up—she only laughs.

It isn't as if there was any place for me to go where she can't see me. From that bough in the laburnum-tree she can peep into all the hidy places in our garden and make them feel as if they weren't hidy at all.

Before she came to live next door I could have fine make-pretends and play the splendidest all-by-myselfy games. But no one can pretend to be a buffalo with people sitting in trees and laughing at them.

At first I didn't take any notice, because I was building a high mountain of sand, with ever so many tunnels running through it, and a railway line, and you could put a golf-ball on the top and it would run in and out all the tunnels till it reached the station at the bottom. Just as I had finished making it and was putting the ball on the very top she stretched down and tipped off my hat with her toe.

I was wild, I was, and if she hadn't been a girl I would have caught her foot and pulled her down so that she came with a bump. But a boy can't do hurty things to a girl, so I just said :—

"You're a nasty little thing, and it's very rude to kick off people's hats that you don't know"

"You're not a people," she said. "You're just a silly little boy."

"I'm eight and a half, and I'm biggerer than you."

"Umphs, but you're frightened of me, all the same."

"I'm not."

"Yes, you are, little Jackie Play-alone."

And she laughed.

I stamped my feet. "My name isn't Jackie, it's Derick." Then to make her wild, "I think yours is Susan or Alice, because you're so hideous and plain."

But she didn't take any notice, and looked as if I'd said she was pretty.

"I shall call you Jackie Play-alone," she said.

"You won't, because I won't let you."

"It's silly to play by oneself," she said. "I'd be ashamed to go trot-trot-trotting round the garden saying 'Puff-puff!'"

"I don't," I yelled.

"All the good games are played by two. Now if you asked me to play with you, instead of hiding all by yourself and looking ashamed, I could show you the loveliest make-beliefs."

I thought of something quick for that.

"Boys don't play with dollies."

"Dollies aren't a game," she answered. "But it would be better if they played with dollies than made squeaky noises like mice and pretended to be buffaloes."

I hadn't known anyone had seen me being a buffalo, and I hadn't wanted them to.

"You're a horrid, horrid little beast," I cried. "I'd like—I'd like——"

"To pull my hair?" And she leant down so that I could have.

"No, but if you don't be careful I'll make the most awfullest face at you."

And because she laughed I did.

"You look quite nice now," she said.

Then I cried for rage, though I tried my hardest not to. Presently she asked :—

"Shall I come down into your garden and comfort you? I can comfort nicely. I didn't mean to make you cry."

And she looked sorry. But I was ashamed, so I said :—

"No. I hate you and loathe you, and if you do I'll p-put spiders down your back."

"Poor little Jackie Play-alone! You'll be sorry you didn't say 'yes.' For you'll only go away and cry all by yourself, and that isn't half so nice."

And because I couldn't think of anything to say I ran away to the little dark shed where the pots and the bulbs and the big besom brooms live and cried all by myself.

II.

IT was absolutely topping being met by the guv'nor at Victoria Station and knowing that the summer holidays had really begun. I just made one leap from the train and hugged him. Lots of chaps of fourteen would be ashamed of

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"IT'S VERY RUDE TO KICK OFF PEOPLE'S HATS THAT YOU DON'T KNOW."

kissing their fathers, but I'm not, 'cause he's the only friend I've ever had or ever shall have.

"Had a good term, Derick?" he asked, as we settled in the taxi.

"It was all right, dad," I answered, "but I'm jolly glad to be coming home again."

"We shall have to stop in town for ten days or so," the guv'nor went on, "but after that we'll get down to the country somewhere and have a real good time."

I was a bit surprised we weren't going at once, so I asked him why. At first he didn't answer, then said:—

"There's a man in Harley Street I have to see every now and then. I've been—er—not quite up to the mark of late, old son. Nothing to bother about."

Then I noticed that he wasn't looking over fit, but before I could speak he was saying:—

"Haven't you got some pal you'd like to invite while we're here? It'll be dull for you by yourself."

"No, thanks, dad. I'm always happier alone."

"You're a queer boy, Derick," said the pater. "I wish you'd chum up with some youngsters of your own age. It—it 'ud make things easier for me, perhaps."

It's always exciting coming home after being away three months. You know where everything is, but you're sort of surprised to see it there. The first thing I did was to go into every room and soak it all in. In my playroom at the top of the house I stopped longest, opening my boxes and examining old books and the kid-toys that somehow I hadn't thrown away.

I didn't come downstairs till lunch-time, and then I found our old doctor sitting with the pater. They were talking together in rather a whispery sort of way.

"Just a minute, old son," said the pater, so I went out and stood on the doorstep for a bit. There was a furniture van next door and some men were carrying in a big piano. I was watching them when I felt a hand on my shoulder and looking up I saw the doctor.

"Derick," he said. "Your father ought not to go away just now. Are you sport enough to spend your holidays here without showing you mind?"

"Why?" I asked, a bit scared. "He's not really ill, is he?"

"No, no. Just wants looking after, that's all—looking after and watching."

"Watching, sir?"

"Ye-es. Derick, if you should notice that he has any trouble steering his hands about, you might let me know."

"I can't quite understand, sir." (One gets into the way of saying "sir" at school.)

"Well, supposing he went to pick up a box of matches and—and missed it—come round and tell me at once."

I believe I'd have laughed if he hadn't looked so serious.

"All right," I said. "I will."

At lunch I said to the pater in a sort of off-hand way that I couldn't see any point in sheering off to the country for the holidays—as I'd been in the country all term-time.

But he wasn't taken in.

"Old Pills and Quinine has been getting at you," he said, "but you're a sportsman all the same."

To tell the truth I was awfully disappointed about not going into the country—I'd been looking forward to it for simply ages. But it wasn't any good bothering, so I took a chair and table and my stamp album and a bottle of gum and went into the garden.

There was a shady patch by the wall under the next door laburnum-tree, where I sat down and started to fix the stamps in the book. I had got some jolly specimens and was taking a good deal of trouble to stick them nicely in the little squares, when I heard a laugh and there perched on a bough overhead was a girl. She had two pigtails of whity-gold hair and her eyes were most awfully blue. Her legs were dangling just above my head. When first I heard the laugh I jumped so that I stuck a most beautiful Argentine on the top of a surcharged Orange Free State.

"It's Jackie Play-alone—only he isn't little any more," she said. Then, "We've just come back."

It was very rude of me, but I was cross about the stamp being spoilt, and that's what made me answer:—

"I'm jolly sorry to hear it."

I expected she'd flare up, but all she said was:—

"Why?"

That was rather a stumper, so I took a high tone, like the Marquis de Chastenay in "Chums."

"I do not think, madam, you are entitled to interrogate me as to my reasons."

Sounds rotten, doesn't it? and I wasn't very proud of having brought it off.

"Oh," she said. "Do you always talk like that—even when you are talking to yourself?"

"I don't talk to myself."

"Yes, you do. You've been muttering away over that silly old stamp book all the afternoon. It reminded me of when you were little. That's what made me laugh."

I dropped back to the de Chastenay note and replied as cool as anything:—

"It rejoices me to have afforded you some merriment."

"You always have."

"Then my days have not been laboured vainly."

"But they must have been laboured alone, Jackie, or someone would have told you it was silly to talk in that unnatural way."

I took a deep breath and made up my mind to give her a nasty jar.

"If your mentalism isn't capable of comprehensing my conversation you'd better go away."

"I sha'n't go away. And 'mentalism' and 'comprehensing' is wrong. Almost as wrong as the squeaky noise you used to make for the buffalo. Remember?"

That's what's so hateful about girls, they always remember horrid things and never mind

bringing them up against you. I told her so, too.

"I feel sorry for you, Jackie," she said, resting her legs along the bough and leaning back against the trunk. She wasn't holding on at all, and it made me feel jumpy for fear she'd fall. Still, I wasn't going to show that.

"Yes, I'm very sorry for you. I'm afraid you'll grow up to be dull and stupid and clever. It's a pity, because you're a nice-looking boy and your hair is very pretty."

I know I must have turned frightfully red, but all I could think to say was :—

"Shut up, can't you ?"

She looked at me in a sorry kind of way and said :—

"Jackie Play-alone, I wish I could talk to you without making you angry—really and truly I do."

I didn't answer.

"Oh, well, I s'pose you've lots of boy friends ?"

"No."

"Are you going to spend your holidays here ?"

"Yes."

I began to work on my stamps again.

"So am I ; but, Jackie, I'm not a bit fond of spending mine alone."

I dipped the brush in the gum and put a small blot on the page.

"Jackie !" Her voice was very soft.

"Um !"

"Don't you think it 'ud be rather nice if we made friends ? If you don't learn how to be jolly now you'll leave it till it's too late, and then when you want to, you won't be able. When you're happy, you know, or when you're sad, you simply *must* have someone to share it with. Don't you think it *would* be rather nice if we made friends ?"

It wasn't that I meant to be aggravating, because she'd asked me quite nicely, only the gum would have dried if I hadn't fixed on the stamp. Besides, you can't answer and do things properly at the same time. But, my eye, you should have heard the way she flared up at me.

"It'll be a long time before I ask you again," she cried. "I thought you were just dull, and 'ud be all right if you were bucked up, but you're worse than that—you're a rude, stupid little prig."

"I say!" I said, and was so taken aback that I gave the table a push and over went the gum bottle, spoiling everything.

"There ! That just serves you right, and I'm jolly glad."

Oh, but I was furious, and in another second I should have let myself go, when I saw the pater coming towards me.

Something in the way he walked was funny. His left foot dragged on the grass as though it wasn't working properly.

Not wanting him to see me talking to that little wretch in the tree, I started to whistle and look about.

"My siesta didn't come off, Derick," he said. "Halloa ! here's a mess. Why not turn the bottle right way up ?" And he stretched out his hand to do so, but instead of touching the bottle his fingers went a couple of inches over it. He tried again and missed it again, then at a third shot he dabbed his hand right in the gum.

"Pater !"

He looked at me queerly, licked his lips, turned round sharply and walked away, his left foot dragging as he went. And from the branch overhead came a great peal of laughter.

I was watching the pater with a horrible cold tingly feeling all over my body, and it was a second or two before I realized she was laughing at him.

"You—you devil !" I cried. "You little devil incarmine." Then without a hat or anything I raced through the side gate for the doctor as fast as I could run.

A specialist came that evening and two nurses, a day and a night one. Soon it was all tip-toeing about the house, and everyone spoke in whispers, and there were no proper meals, and there was a horrid dry feeling at the back of my throat.

I don't remember how many hours or days it lasted. They told me he was to have an operation on his brain, and the maids moved all the furniture out of a spare room and took down the curtains and scrubbed the floors with disinfectant soap.

Nobody talked to me, and there was nothing I could do but moon round from one room to another, hang about on the staircase, or look out into the street.

When everything was ready I went up to see the pater.

"'Fraid this isn't helping your holiday much," he said. "Told you you'd want a pal to make things go."

I believe the nurse saw I was going to blub, so she bundled me off to telephone to the greengrocer for grapes or something, and when I came back the door was closed and both doctors were inside, and there was a sickly smell in the air, which I knew was chloroform, because I'd had it for tonsils.

So I went downstairs to the pater's study, and, oh, it was awful !

For something to do I arranged his books and pipes. I filled one of them and put a box of matches beside it to be ready for when he was well again. Then I sat down and waited and waited and waited, while the footsteps overhead went to and fro. Something kept repeating itself over and over in my head. "When you're jolly or when you're sad you simply *must* have someone to share it with." She said that—that horrid little beast in the laburnum-tree, who'd laughed at my father—laughed ! Oh, how I hated her !

It was getting darker, and the window was just a purple patch in the wall. Outside in the street you could hear the traffic rolling by—then I heard the door upstairs open and somebody's voice, a man's, saying, "Where's that boy ? He'll have to be told."

"Oh, oh !" I choked, and because I daren't face hearing what I knew had happened I let myself over the window ledge, dropped into the garden, and ran for the darkest place, and a voice over my head said :—

"'IT'S JACKIE PLAY-ALONE—ONLY HE ISN'T LITTLE ANY MORE,' SHE SAID."

"Jackie, Jackie, what is it?"

"He's—he's dead!" I gasped.

"Jackie!"

"He's dead, and"—then I remembered, and bit back the want to cry that was choking me—"and you laughed at him."

"Oh, Jackie!" she cried, pitifully, and began to climb down from the bough. "Jackie, my poor, poor darling!"

"No," I stamped, "no, I don't want you. I hate you. You laughed at him—you only laughed at him."

And then because there was nowhere I could go to hide my wretchedness I stumbled anyhow into the old potting-shed, flung myself down on the litter of mould and cobwebby boxes, and sobbed and sobbed with my head on the grass box of the lawn-mower.

III.

I DON'T know what brought about the change in me—perhaps the thunder rumbling ominously in the distance—perhaps the new moon showing like a white feather in a fragment of blue between the massed receding clouds—but quite suddenly I felt all different.

A moment before I had been reading in the *Pall Mall* of the astonishing success of this brilliant and rising young barrister "whose University career had been marked with one triumph after another."

"We understand," they concluded, "Mr. Derick Ryland has always placed work before other considerations and abandoned worldly calls to worship at that single shrine."

It had pleased me as I read it, pleased and gratified, and now——!

I couldn't help remembering a day when the professor had held me up as a pattern of virtue to some other men of my year. That was when I got my Double First. There was a mirror in the hall that reflected all of us. The men who'd been ploughed for one reason or another all looked perfectly happy and mine was the only wretched face among them.

"You might have done as well as Ryland," said old Wenzell, to one of the men, "if you'd studied your work as carefully as you have studied having a good time."

"Perhaps, sir," came the answer, "but it was worth it." And he looked at me in a pitying kind of way.

I'd never made any friends, but had given up everything to swat along by myself, and here was I at twenty-five realizing the result of a studious and well-spent life, and then—as I said—came this change, this sudden intolerable longing for companionship—this overwhelming desire to be jolly.

I caught up the paper and tore it in half. What right have they to force my silly narrow life down the throats of their readers and make me out as someone to be envied?—pitied would be a truer word.

"I've been a fool," I said, "a self-centred unfriendly fool, but that's all done with. I'm sick of this life—sick of solitude—I'm going to enjoy myself—have a fling—let myself go."

Then I sat down before my heaped-up desk and wondered how it was to be done. Without friends or experience it presented no little problem, but I was determined not to be dissuaded on that account. Accordingly I donned a hat, shut the door of my dusty old chambers, and took a cab to the Carlton.

It was a foolish thing to do, for there is not much festivity at six-thirty in the evening—moreover, I had forgotten to put on evening dress, and the gorilla-like padrone very properly placed me behind a palm in the most remote part of the dining-hall.

I ordered myself a "Clover Club" (Heaven knows how I knew such things existed), and sipped the termaline-hued fluid luxuriously. It was pleasing, but it seemed rather idiotic to drink American jewels alone. With my dinner I had half a bottle of '06 Duminy, which tinkled like joy-bells on my palate.

I had finished my last course before people began to arrive, and although the waiters would not for the world have betrayed by speech that my table was of more interest to them than my society, I sensed it was time to be moving.

As I descended the staircase to the lounge I passed little parties of care-free folk prattling the most attractive nonsense in the happiest vein of humour.

Somehow the sight and the sound of them filled me with a great jealousy. Why shouldn't I have jolly friends and a smiling girl to laugh and talk to? I'd come out for a good time, and all I'd had was a good dinner—alone—and I wasn't even conscious I had enjoyed it.

The clock struck eight as I received my hat and stick in exchange for a two-shilling piece and a white ticket. Eight o'clock! What the deuce was I going to do? I shook my head in answer to an inviting gesture from a cab whistle with a commissionaire attached, and wended my way towards Leicester Square.

"Here," I thought, "is the Mecca of pleasure-seekers—it is here people come who want to have a 'topping time'—this is the general head-quarters of 'Binging,' 'Jags,' and 'Joy Shouts.'"

I passed the doors of a popular lounge, where the very young, so I'd been told, saw life and not infrequently the interior of Vine Street police-station as a direct consequence.

The brilliantly-illuminated façade of the Empire lured me farther on. A stream of taxis were depositing fares and achieving miracles of driving in the dense traffic. I read the posters for a while and watched the cosmopolitan sleeve-plucking crowds drifting this way and that. The air was heavy with the smell of patchouli like an Eastern bazaar.

Then a girl I didn't know said, "Here he is," and shook hands with me. I am ashamed to chronicle that the touch of that small gloved hand gave me something of a thrill; nevertheless, I told her as nicely as I could, for the task was strange to me, that I wasn't really "here" at all, and she smiled and passed on in search of someone who was.

She had no sooner gone than I reflected that I was a fool. I had come out in search of

gaiety and companionship, and when it was offered had thrown the chance away. So after a moment's hesitation I set off in pursuit. The little grey hat was bobbing in the crowd not forty yards distant and it turned, so I thought, up the dark narrow thoroughfare before Wardour Street. Thither in due course, and after sundry collisions, I followed, but with no success. My chase led me across Shaftesbury Avenue and into the intricate by-ways of Soho. Then vaguely I found myself wondering what I should say to the brazen-eyed little buccaneer if I chanced to overtake her, and came to the conclusion that I should not be able to say anything at all. That being so, this pursuit levelled down to a sheer and rather degrading piece of folly. So I stopped and found myself in Tottenham Court Road. An old horse bus, one of the survivors, was coming towards me going in a northerly direction. Without any particular reason I boarded it and took a seat on the top.

"This is a fine way of spending the evening," I thought, "to turn one's back on the pleasure grounds and beat it for the solitudes of St. John's Wood. There's no doubt at all I don't know how to be jolly. I only know that I'm wanting something or someone and that I'm very, very depressed indeed."

The bus halted by the prison-like walls of Lord's Cricket Ground, and by the token that both driver and conductor descended and disappeared into an adjacent tavern I assumed our destination had been reached. So I, too, got off and wandered still northwards until, partly by accident and partly by magnetism, I found myself in the treeful little avenue where we used to live and where my father had died. I had left there shortly afterwards, and ten years had gone since last I passed it by. I was conscious of an almost unearthly quiet and smell of laburnum blossom on the night air.

Laburnum! The scent seemed to awaken memories—of what? I sniffed the honey of it deep into my lungs, and then I remembered, and a picture arose of a little girl with very blue eyes, a mass of whity-gold hair, of black stockinged dangling legs, and then I saw myself as she must have seen me.

"By Jove!" I said, aloud, "she wasn't far wrong when she gave me the name of Jackie Play-alone and said that I should grow up dull and stupid and clever. She offered me friendship and I didn't take it. What a fool! What a fool!"

I looked at the house where she used to live and several of the windows were lighted. In the one that had been ours no lights showed at all—it was as sombre and joyless as I myself.

As I stood there a great desire possessed me to revisit my old playground and reconstruct old associations—after all, I had come out for an evening's excitement, and Heaven knows it had been sober enough up to this point. So without waiting for my courage to ebb I flitted across the front garden, shinned up the trellis by the side gate, and dropped noiselessly on to the gravel on the other side.

It felt wonderfully queer being back in the old garden again where I'd played my lonely games. It brought back memories of a certain night when, to escape the vigilant eye of my little persecutor in the tree, I had crept out of bed and buried a great treasure under a lilac bush at the end of the garden. The treasure in question was a tin biscuit box containing a collection of bus and tram tickets entrusted to the earth on account of its great value and historic interest. There was a sevenpenny ticket among them—the queen bee of the hive.

Did the collection still survive, I wondered, or had the intruding fork of some hired gardener disinterred and cast it upon the rubbish heap?

It is a ridiculous confession for a man of twenty-five to make, but my curiosity drove me to the little old potting-shed, where very quietly I annexed a spade.

As I was emerging misfortune visited me, for in closing the door an old pane of glass, whose putty had long since ceased to putt, fell on the stone step with a great crash.

I froze instantly, expecting every moment a window to be thrown up and a head appear, but everything was silent, except—I wasn't sure, but I thought I heard a light step on gravel and the sound of cracking twigs.

After remaining immobile in the shadows for some time, I convinced myself it was only imagination, and crept across the grass to the spot where the treasure lay concealed. So sure is memory of past things that with the third dip of the spade I had unearthed the old tin box and taken it in my hand. But before allowing myself the luxury of looking within I replaced the earth and for greater privacy stole down beside the wall until I came beneath the shelter of the hanging laburnum-tree. Then with a penknife I prised open the lid and revealed within a colourless pulpy mass, all that was left of the priceless collection. It seemed very sad to me to look down on that dead game, and I stood there silently contemplating the decomposed bus tickets with, I can well believe, the expression of a village idiot.

Then a voice almost beside my ear said:—

"What are you doing there?"

And it seemed so natural she should have spoken that I answered without looking up.

"Something I hid from you years ago."

"I don't understand. Are you a burglar?"

I shook my head and replied, "No."

"I think you must be. Only burglars hide under trees in the middle of the night and dig in strange gardens. You must be a burglar. Aren't you?"

"You had another name for me once," I said.

She didn't answer for a moment, then, "You aren't——"

"Yes, I am—I'm Jackie Play-alone, and please I'm very, very tired of being him. Couldn't you take the curse away?" And I looked up and could just see her eyes and a glow I knew must be her hair.

"But you're Mr. Derick Ryland, the brilliant ornament to the Bar."

"CAN'T YOU SEE I'M COMING DOWN AS FAST AS I CAN?"

"I'm Jackie Play-alone, all the same, and everything you said about me has come true."

"What did I say?"

"That I'd grow up dull and stupid and clever."

"I remember."

"And that if I didn't learn to be jolly then I'd leave it till too late, and when I wanted to I shouldn't be able."

"And is it true?"

"Most awfully true. I want to be jolly, tremendously, and I don't know how."

"Have you tried?"

"I've begun to try—I tried to-night."

"What did you do?"

"Had dinner at the Carlton and went for a walk in Leicester Square."

"And was it jolly?"

"Not a bit."

"And then?"

"Then I came on here."

"Why?"

"Had to."

"But you don't live here any longer. A horrid old man lives here now, who knocks orange-peel off the pavement with his umbrella."

"Does he? I climbed over the side gate and sneaked in."

"That was a good beginning."

"This is a better going on."

"It's years since you came."

"Years and years. Have you been sitting up that tree ever since?"

She gave the sweetest and most water-like little laugh.

"No, I heard you in the garden, so I climbed up to see. I used to be a horrid pig to you, Jackie."

"No, you weren't. You offered to be my friend and I wouldn't let you."

"And wasn't I cross?"

"I shouldn't make you cross if you offered again."

"Do you want a friend, then?"

"I want everything you once offered and I once refused."

"Tell me exactly."

"I want you to come down into my garden. I want you to teach me the loveliest 'make-beliefs' and 'let's-pretends'; I want to learn to be jolly and share being sad with you."

"What a funny little thing you are," she said.

"I've missed so much," I explained. "And it does seem such a pity."

"Why a pity?" she asked.

"Because my hair is really pretty," I answered, with an idiotic flash of memory.

She laughed. "Why do you ask me to teach you?"

"Because you promised."

"Ever and ever so long ago."

"That doesn't matter."

"Tell me, then, how to begin."

"By climbing from that bough."

"But it's such a long way down."

"I'd see you didn't fall."

"And what then?"

"Then we should forgive each other and make up our old quarrel."

"How?"

"I don't know. How would you have made it up last time?"

"That's different. Last time we were little, and I expect I should have kissed you."

"Would you—would you really?"

"Yes—last time."

"It—it seems a very good way," I managed to say.

"If we'd still been babies."

"Does that make all the difference?"

"Yes—all."

Then I took a deep breath and said:—

"Couldn't we start by having a big 'pretend' that it didn't make any difference at all?"

"I don't see how we could."

"Not even if I threatened to howl all by myself in the potting-shed? I could do it easily."

"I shouldn't like you to do that."

"It 'ud be your fault if I did. Only you can prevent me."

"Would you really if I said 'No'?"

"Truly and positively, and p'r'aps I should break another pane of glass doing it and p'r'aps Tom Tiddler would throw up the window and call for a policeman, and I should be run in for stealing bus tickets and my career at the Bar would be ruined, which wouldn't matter a bit, and I should gradually become a horrid old man who chased orange-peel off the pavement, which would matter a lot, and I should die—die—die without ever having learnt how to be jolly or how to be sad or how——"

"Oh, hush, Jackie, please, please, hush!" she said. "Can't you see I'm coming down as fast as I can?"

LEST YOU FORGET!

DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home and abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

THE JOB

By MAY EDGINTON.

Illustrated by Treyer Evans.

"WELL, Arthur," said Sir William, as he laid down the season's best seller, "I've just finished a very entertaining book, my boy. A book with a fine plot. I've reached the age, my boy, when I like to know what I'm going to read as soon as I turn the first page, and I hope there'll be another novel about it next year. I've no doubt there will. I've read some fifty with this theme, Arthur, since I was a lad."

"Yes, Uncle William," Arthur replied.

"Where is my gruel?" peeved Sir William. "Hand it to me, my lad. That stupid girl, that Parks, brought it in a while ago. Thank-ee." As he lapped, the old gentleman continued: "I'm going to tell you the plot, Arthur. Sit still, and don't wriggle. You may have won the V.C., but I brought you up. Now, in this fine book I've just been reading, there was a rich uncle who was going to leave his nephew all his money on condition that the boy married before his next birthday. So——"

"Thank you, Uncle William," said Arthur. "I—I believe I've read the book. I recognize——"

"You can't have, my boy," said Sir William, with vexation. "It's only just out."

"But, uncle," said Arthur, "I read——"

"One of the others," said Sir William; "one of the others. Now this rich uncle in this book, my boy, might be me; and the nephew might be you."

Arthur moistened his lips with his tongue-tip.

"Don't wriggle," said Sir William; "this gruel ain't bad. Cook's dashed it with the old brandy, 'pon my soul. I shouldn't be surprised if I danced with the best of you to-night." The old gentleman smiled roguishly, and resumed: "You've won the V.C., but I brought you up, and I've a right to talk to you for your good. Here're you, thirty-two, never going to fly again, given a nice job on the Staff at home, and all that you can do for your country now is to marry. You've always been a shy lad; very different from me."

After some rosy recollections, the old gentleman put a few pertinent queries.

"Have you ever proposed to a girl, Arthur?"

"No," said Arthur.

"Have you ever wanted to?" Uncle William pursued.

"No," said Arthur.

The old gentleman was silent, musing, for a while. He shook his head.

"Perhaps you ought to see a doctor," said he.

Arthur issued a faint protest.

"You've made a poor thing of life, I'm afraid, my boy," said Uncle William, very commiseratingly.

"Not at all, sir," replied Arthur, murmuring.

"Has a girl ever proposed to you?" asked Sir William.

"Nearly, sir," said Arthur; "that was how I got the—er—this little ornament here. We'd got a concert behind the lines, near one of the dressing stations, and some nurses from the nearest base were coming down to it, and there was one—she'd nursed me through a go of influenza once, and I knew she was going to sit next me, and it would be all up——"

"Fine women, these nurses," said Sir William, with a sparkle. "The flower of England! Dear me! Go on."

"So," said Arthur, blushing, "I got permission to go up, reconnoitring a bit. It was the only way of getting out of the concert. And I'd got to stay up till the show was over, or else she—well, it would have been all up. So I dropped into that little shindy—a newspaper man wrote home all that stuff about it—and you know the rest."

"This story is not very creditable, sir," said Uncle William, in displeasure. "However, well, here's my ultimatum: You'll propose to a girl at your Aunt Mary's little

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dance to-night. There'll be plenty. Why not one of the young women staying in the house with us at present? Very nice young women. There's Miss Carisbrook, and little Lydia, and Mrs. Delany—poor young thing—and the Lupton twins. Now, sir, that's my ultimatum to *you!* You may have won the V.C., but you can't look a woman in the face. So now! To-morrow morning I shall ask you if you've done it, and who she is."

The old gentleman waved his hands, then crossed them upon his waist, then closed his eyes.

The interview was over.

Leaving the room quietly, Arthur met little Parks. Being the second housemaid, she wore all day a crackling dress of print, with smooth white apron, and a stiff high collar about her neck. She looked young and plump and fair, and spoke with distant respect to Arthur, saying: "Please, sir, do you know if Sir William has finished his gruel?"

Replying monosyllabically, and with averted eyes, Arthur hastened on. The house was in a tumult, all dressed and decked for the dance, and the girls who were staying in it for the event were flitting about in their V.A.D. uniforms. They were very ardent about militarism, and had even forsworn the alluring mufti of their best dance frocks.

As they surrounded Arthur they looked worshipfully at his decoration, and tried to soothe his nervous state with fair words.

He realized, with infinite fear, that he was the hero of the evening.

Arthur was not foolish. His caution had, from his earliest years, been to him as a buffer against the power of the feminine. It was to him both as an advanced post and a reinforcement. It surrounded him like a barbed-wire entanglement, and went before him like a fixed bayonet. It had never failed him once in any minute of his thirty-two years. It didn't fail him now. As he looked around, answering the girls with deceitful words, while in his secret heart he mistrusted them ferociously from the tops of their white caps to the toes of their frivolous slippers, he was trying to select a safe thing.

"When I was a little boy," said Arthur to himself, "I learned that text about not being able to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, but——"

Modest as he was, Arthur knew himself to be abler than most men. Most men do. The excellent precept seemed old and dim. He played for safety. Looking over to a window embrasure he saw a young lady, in uniform like the rest. She was not pretty; no matter. She was rosy, substantial, and very dull; so much the better. But there was an ineffable charm about her.

"'STEERS,' HE SAID, 'A BRANDY AND SODA.' THE BUTLER REFUSED IT."

It consisted in the diamond ring on the third finger of her left hand.

Turning to the young widow whose lovely eyes were surveying him, Arthur asked, almost with eagerness: "Mrs. Delany, will you introduce me to the lady over there?"

"A Miss Arnold," said Mrs. Delany, drawling. "She has just arrived. Dear Lady Harris is putting her up for to-night, I believe. Introduce you? Why, certainly, if you wish it." Gliding over the polished floor, Mrs. Delany added: "She is engaged."

"No matter," said Arthur, a little incoherently. "No matter at all." Seated by the side of the stodgy maiden he thought to himself: "This is good enough for me."

She would refuse him. He would be firmly inconsolable. Arthur was no actor, but necessity is a sure goad. He displayed that evening histrionic talent which surprised himself.

He shadowed Miss Arnold with a pertinacity worthy of a more beautiful magnet.

Arthur was not brilliant in ballroom arts. He was the solid kind which perseveres but never twinkles. All the evening he persevered with Miss Arnold until he tired her out. Aware of the diamond ring on her left-hand third finger, she plumbed obscurely for his intentions. They danced together industriously, but never divinely. And at the seventh time the patience of this sorely-tried girl failed and fainted.

She said to Arthur, while the other couples around them fox-trotted with energy and glee, "Mr. Harris, I think an ice in the conservatory——"

Now by this she upset Arthur's plans completely, and perturbed all his calculations. This was the seventh dance he had danced with Miss Arnold; it was the eleventh on the programme. He had intended during the twelfth dance to adjourn alone to the buffet and to say confidentially to the butler, "Steers, a very large brandy." The thirteenth dance of the programme was again booked with Miss Arnold, and Arthur intended to claim it when thoroughly fortified for what was coming.

He had decided then to say to her, "Miss Arnold, I think an ice in the conservatory——"

Establishing her in the darkest corner, and holding her little ice-plate for her so that nothing more could be expected by any reasonable woman of his hands, he was then going to say——

But now here she was taking the words from his mouth two dances before they were, according to map, due!

"Certainly," he said; "certainly," his head all bedazed, his wrists fluttery, and his feet cold.

The conservatory was empty. He put her in the darkest corner, where she was but a glim in the Japanese-lantern twilight, and stood before her clasping and unclasping his hands.

"The ice?" she murmured, coaxingly.

"Certainly," said Arthur; "oh, certainly! At the double."

He plunged out.

The ungrateful girl rose, stole out into the garden, flew round the house, through the front door, up the stairs, and into her bedroom. Here she sat down and powdered her nose and laughed. She then opened a large box of sweets—a love-gift—took into her hands the photograph of her *fiancé*, and, with the consolation of his fond smile and his super-chocolates, resigned herself to mark time here until she could safely go down again to be claimed by another partner.

As for Arthur, he was standing by the kindly Steers, with a small ice-plate in one hand and a large tumbler in the other. It will be observed that he kept as nearly as possible to the original programme. He stayed to drink two brandies and sodas before he returned to the darkest corner of the conservatory.

He saw with feverish eyes the glim of the feminine figure in the Japanese-lantern twilight.

He stood before the glim, holding out the ice.

"Do," he said, "eat the ice. It is a strawberry one."

He had a feeling that it would be good to get her busy.

She stretched out a nice little paw without a word, and commenced to eat rapturously.

With her apparently high standard of rapid demolition it was evident that the ice would not long be permitted to play its part; this is why Arthur spoke long before he was ready.

"You must have seen ere now—by this—how I admire you. In fact, I love you. That is to say, will you marry me?"

The sound of an uninterpretable "Oh!" mingled with the clatter of a little spoon upon the paved floor.

"You would make me the happiest of men," said Arthur, very thinly.

"Oh!" came faintly from the dusky bower.

Arthur waited awhile for the regretful refusal which came not; and "My God!" said he to himself. "She is never going to accept me! She is never going to throw over that poor fellow for me! The disgraceful perfidy——"

Arthur had learned the tactical value of speedy decisions.

Placing the little ice-plate on her aproned lap, he drew himself up and clicked his heels.

"I will not press you," he said. "I would not persecute a woman. I would rather you refused me than made yourself unhappy. In fact, don't give me an answer at all. Think about it for a year or two. We are both young, or youngish. You may decide to forget me."

"Oh, no!" came a voice, very small and fluttered.

"I will leave you," said Arthur, drawing back.

"Oh, no, no!" replied the voice, hurriedly.

"Yes, you would prefer me to go," said Arthur, more firmly.

Once more he plunged blindly from the conservatory, and skirting the ballroom, where the dancers disported themselves, he met Miss Arnold face to face.

"You!" he said, gasping.

Woman has, from uncharted times, always stood up to her faults, trusting that her sheer bland cheek will cause man to wink at them; and to wink happily.

"Me!" she replied, blatantly, nodding.

Arthur was now in the mud, up to his neck, and he knew it. He went to Steers.

"Steers," he said, "a brandy and soda."

The butler refused it.

"Wait a hour," said he; "just a hour, Mr. Arthur. It was me which helped Sir William to bring you up."

"'WOULD YOU ADVISE ME TO MAKE A BOLT OF IT?' ARTHUR ASKED."

"But, Steers," said Arthur, "I have proposed to a lady in the dark, and I don't know who it was."

Then he helped himself to brandy, and went away to think out the situation alone.

It was Steers who made Lady Harris acquainted, in the most delicate fashion, with what had occurred.

Her ladyship, in quest of someone of solid, trusty character, someone married or nearly married, to whom to betray Arthur with a view to assisting him, picked on Miss Arnold.

They sat long in conclave.

"It wasn't you, dear, I suppose?" said Lady Harris. "If it was, no harm is done; and we are all as we were."

"It wasn't I," replied Miss Arnold. Being an engaged young lady, and not averse to promoting similar entanglements, she went, after assuring Lady Harris of her safety and silence, to whisper questions about; for the

faithlessness of the married toward confidences already corrupted her virgin integrity.

By the time the last outgoing guest had gone, and only the house-party—pretending to yawn, but alight with excitement—was left, they all knew what had occurred; but, bound under promise to Miss Arnold not to reveal it, everyone kept her secret.

They eyed each other a little askance.

It was dear Lady Harris, with her inimitable tact and charm, who endeavoured, as she dispensed candles, to coax the truth from Mrs. Delany, Miss Carisbrook, little Lydia, or one of the Lupton twins.

"I heard it whispered," said she, archly, "that our young hero had put a very important question to some lucky girl to-night. But to whom he put it has not yet been divulged."

Girls smiled at each other wanly, not to say with suspicion. No one picked up the laurels. It was evident that——

As the thought passed round, another followed it. Arthur had proposed marriage—in the dark, and by mistake as each knew in the privacy of her soul—to someone who didn't even know him, any more than he knew her; and thus——

He would go unclaimed!

He was in the exact position of lost luggage.

The girls smiled very sweetly.

It was dawn-break when the last confidential hairbrushing ceased, and nothing had been revealed by anybody to anybody.

Arthur slept merely from inherent force of character; and the first reminder he had of time and place was when little Parks knocked and entered with his tea. She placed it handily upon the bedside table, and drew the curtains from a fine morning.

"Good morning, sir," said little Parks.

"Good morning," Arthur replied.

Being a housemaid, Parks was really more of a habit than a woman, and Arthur felt comfortably at home with her. She saw him in his pyjamas, unshaved, and knew the worst. There were no frills about the matutinal occurrence. It will be understood why he was able to speak to her without the disabilities which clogged his speech when addressing ladies.

"Parks," he said, "I suppose you have all heard from Steers——?"

"Yes, sir," said little Parks.

"Contradict it, then, there's a good girl," said Arthur. He, too, had realized his position, not without self-gratulation, and had decided on happy obscurity in the dust of the Lost-Property Office.

"I can't, sir," said little Parks.

"Would you advise me to make a bolt of it?" Arthur asked, after a ruminative pause.

"I read in a novel that cook lent me that you can't flee from Fate, sir," replied little Parks.

"Why not?" said Arthur, perspiring, and rattling his cup in his saucer.

"Fate will follow you, sir," answered little Parks, respectfully.

She withdrew, and tapped on Mrs. Delany's door.

"Parks," said Mrs. Delany, very pretty and full of guile, upon her pillows, "I expect you have all heard downstairs from Steers——"

"Yes, 'm," little Parks murmured.

"I suppose Steers told you it was I," said Mrs. Delany, lying. "Did he *not?* Well, everyone seemed a little uncertain! However, servants appreciate little jokes as well as other people. You can tell them all the news at breakfast, Parks, can you not?"

Little Parks drew the curtains from a fine morning.

"You seem a good girl," said Mrs. Delany. "I have a dress I meant to give away. Would you like to open the wardrobe? There, on the fifth hanger. The mauve Georgette. It will cut up into a nice Sunday blouse for you."

"Thank you, 'm," replied little Parks, going away very respectfully with the spoil.

"Good morning, Parks," said the elder Miss Lupton, with a sunny brightness.

"Good morning, miss," answered Parks, drawing the curtains, etc.

"Are you displeased with the news?" Miss Lupton asked, brightly.

"The news, miss?" said little Parks, smiling.

"Come!" said Miss Lupton, "you people gossip, *I* know! Come, come! You *don't* mean that Steers, who told Lady Harris just when Mr. Arthur and I wanted to keep our little secret to ourselves, didn't let it out in the servants' hall?"

"We weren't sure who was the lady, miss," Parks replied.

"And now *you* will be able to go and tell them, and steal a march on Steers," said Miss Lupton, condescending to Parks very charmingly in her genial manner. "How very funny! By the way, there are some black satin slippers—the ones I wore last night—which I'm not requiring any longer. I don't know what you can do with them, but I dare say Lady Harris lets you have a dance sometimes?"

"Thank you, miss," said Parks, gratefully. She gathered into the slippers very tenderly

the silk stockings which had dropped over them like lazy snakes, and hurried on to little Lydia.

Little Lydia was full of childish charm. Parks might be a housemaid, but in matters so sacred, so elemental, they were girl to girl. In her new-found joy little Lydia, who was even littler than Parks, was so overflowing with generosity towards the masses that, while authorizing Parks to break the news at once in all quarters, she gave her a pair of ear-rings.

Little Parks now sought breakfast. Cook was already at the head of the table pouring out, with a smile upon her face. She motioned to a chair beside her, which had been kept vacant for this arrival, for little Parks was such a bright girl in her own sphere, and sympathetic to boot.

"Is Mr. Arthur up yet, lovey?" said cook privily to Parks, with a slight simper.

"No," said little Parks, thoughtfully, "not yet."

"IN THE BOOK I'M READING THE COUNTESS MARRIES HER GROOM, AND I DON'T SEE NOTHING MORE DISCREPANT IN AN ARMY OFFICER MARRYING A GOOD COOK."

The younger Miss Lupton, who was *very* young and inclined to be a little fulsome in extremity, went so far as to let Parks choose her own present, and she went away to Miss Carisbrook's door with a great Oriental scarf, big enough to cover her all up.

Miss Carisbrook was stately and languid over her engagement. She opened by inquiring if Mr. Arthur was up yet. She took everything royally for granted; and she asked Parks, with a regal kindness, if that little old petticoat over there wouldn't cut up into something smart for her.

"He'll want to see me when he is," said the cook, whispering. "Of course, I've let it be a secret; and Mr. Arthur, he was only joking with Mr. Steers when he said he didn't know who the lady was. But he knows. He knows. He's deep, is Mr. Arthur. No doubt I didn't ought to have been in the conservatory with him, but nature is nature, and we've all got it. In the book I'm reading now the Countess marries her groom, and I don't see nothing more discrepant in an Army officer marrying a good cook. I dare say the family will try to mar our joy, dear, but

you'll back me up? You'll go straight to Mr. Arthur, won't you, my dear, and tell him all about it?"

"I will go straight back to him," said little Parks, preparing to rise, so good-natured was she, breakfast or no breakfast. "Do you think I could have the day off, cook, dear?"

"I'll get it for you, if I eat dirt," the cook replied, with agitation.

Little Parks slipped away, and, meeting the boot-boy, sent him with an order to the stables. She was soon knocking upon Arthur's door.

"Come in," said he. He was sitting on the edge of the bed, feeling worried.

"Mr. Arthur," said little Parks, with her admirable simplicity, "I've ordered the trap round for you in half an hour; and I've come to pack for you, sir. You can get something cold in the dining-room when you're dressed, and I'll speak to Mr. Steers private about the coffee."

"LITTLE PARKS KEPT HIM WAITING FASHIONABLY THAT EVENING. AND WHEN SHE CAME SHE WAS COVERED ALL UP IN A MARVELLOUS ORIENTAL THING."

She numbered to him, with some descriptive talent, the forces arrayed against him.

"You're a good girl," said Arthur, flying bathwards. He added: "I will never marry, Parks, never. The effort and turmoil and excitement——"

When he returned his packing was done, and Parks was in the act of leaving the room.

Arthur detained her.

"Parks," said he, "I expect you have heard there was once a queen, or a king, who said to a man or a woman, 'Here is a ring; if you want anything send it to me and I shall know.' I expect they teach you these things in those schools, Parks? Well, here isn't a ring, but if I can do you a kindness, Parks, any time, let me know. I will repay."

Parks herself, intrusion as it was on sacred precincts, helped Steers with Arthur's breakfast, and watched with vigilant eye over his departure.

Arthur immersed himself in work, and left all private letters unanswered as far as possible. One may imagine that he received many of an intriguing character. He had left behind him in Midlandshire five ladies and a woman, the unison of whose claims upon his affections in itself constituted a sufficient denial of his responsibilities, and he let it go at that. "This is good enough for me," he said to himself, "and Uncle William is surely convinced six times over that I obliged him."

It was a very short while after this—so great is the enthusiasm and energy of present-day woman—that Arthur received a certain letter reminding him of a pledge. It was from little Parks.

"Dear Mr. Arthur," the young girl wrote in an excellent hand, "I have passed my tests; and have been engaged as a driver to the R.F.C. It would be very pleasant, dear Mr. Arthur, to drive for an officer what knows me and would keep his distance. Please will you mind asking Sir John Jellicoe or the King if I could have the honour of driving you?"

Arthur laid little Parks's request at the proper door, and being a young man with the right kind of relations and a V.C., he experienced little difficulty. He exchanged a lady driver who truly terrified him for one who was already a habit, and, moreover, a housemaid unashamed.

Little Parks was a *chic* figure in her uniform. She'd sort of taken it by the shoulders and given it a devilish swing, and her brown boots shone like winking, and her rammed-down hat was cocked just a very little over her left ear. She was of a wonderful calm efficiency.

"These are amazing times, Parks," said Arthur, when he had surveyed her longer than he knew, "amazing times. Transformations take place——"

He climbed in; she shut the door smartly, and hopped after him. They were away through the traffic like a torpedo.

For some while Arthur had been feeling a certain lamentable fact more deeply than his friends guessed. That fact was his inability gaily to ruffle it with the girls. All the rest of the Staff made itself very happy every evening; and knew by heart quips and clichés of wonderful brilliance; and could speak confidently of the relative advantages of tulle and Georgette. Among them Arthur was lonely, knowing himself not as they. He was aware of their admiration for him as a hero and their pity for him as a man.

Pity rankles.

As little Parks nipped northward, Arthur said to himself: "I will take out Parks!"

It was immense. He could run her on all trial trips. She was used to him. Any old thing he said would go down like ice-cream. She had brought him his tea of mornings and prepared his bath.

"Parks," said Arthur, after a preliminary cough, with a fluttery feeling in his wrists, and freezing feet.

She did not hear.

"Parks," said Arthur.

Her face, intent upon her work, remained oblivious of his voice. Conscientiousness seemed her *forte*.

"Miss Parks," said Arthur.

She turned to him with a bright smile, and mentally Arthur clicked his heels and stood at attention and kept his eyes open.

"Miss Parks," said he, "would you care to dine out this evening?"

"Thank you, Mr. Arthur," she replied, with a dimpling of her whole face.

"We'll go—we'll go——" said Arthur, thinking, "to—to Gatti's."

She raised her eyebrows. "If you don't mind," murmured she, nonchalant, "I prefer Prince's."

"We shall be seen," said Arthur to himself, "we shall be seen!" Then, aloud: "J-Just as you like, Miss Parks. I shall be happy."

"Yes, Mr. Arthur," said little Parks, in a sudden burst of motherliness, "you shall."

Little Parks kept him waiting fashionably that evening. And when she came—alighting from a taxicab—she was covered all up in a marvellous Oriental thing, from which her feet and ankles emerged clad respectively in satin and silk. Ear-rings dangled provokingly

from her ears. And when she removed the Oriental thing she revealed herself in a wee gown of mauve Georgette, beneath which was a little old petticoat of great, if *passée*, charm. Of course, only Parks knew that; but it helped to keep her *morale* high.

Often when men see a plain woman, unjustified by her surface toilette, coquetting like a beauty, they feel surprise; but always there is some small thing, like the petticoat of Parks, or less, unseen but, just the same, potent, to make her *morale* a quality for all to wonder at.

Anyway, Arthur had a lovely evening.

He felt more than ever used to Parks when she drew up at Headquarters next morning to drive him out to a far place where he had a long, stern job awaiting him. It was a nice day, and she looked happy as a bird.

Most of the day she was waiting about for Arthur; and she spent the time profitably in thought.

She had never been an idle girl.

The sun had set before Parks headed that grey-green car for town and life again.

And in the middle of a great heath, crossed by long and lonely roads, that car slurred and rasped to a stop.

It was good to see how competently Parks sprang from her seat, flung up the bonnet, and dived her little fearless hand in.

The base work of her little fearless hand was hidden from Arthur, as he sat, peering after Parks through the twilight.

"I hope," said she, brave and cheery, "that we haven't *lost* anything, Mr. Arthur. And I hope we haven't broken anything. They couldn't let me have the spares I wanted at the garage this morning. It won't be my fault, Mr. Arthur."

Little Parks came round presently, lifting to Arthur a face in which fortitude sat.

"Mr. Arthur," said she, "we have broken the distributor on the magneto."

"But!" Arthur cried.

He sprang out to see the damage.

"Parks," said he, "Miss Parks, we're done!"

They surveyed each other gravely.

"We must walk——" Arthur began.

He examined the many long, dim, winding roads with some distrust. "Miles and miles," he added.

"I am in charge of this car," said the brave girl, looking protectingly at the monster, "and I will not leave her."

"Then I must walk miles and miles alone," said Arthur. "I will send help from somewhere, Miss Parks."

Arthur walked away into the night.

He heard a little low bleating call behind him, and returned.

"Oh, Mr. Arthur!" said little Parks, "there'll be ghosts."

Realizing with unusual quickness that a soldier's job is, after all, the protection of helpless women, Arthur climbed quickly back beside Parks, who had re-entered the car.

"I will not leave you," he said, with a certain tensity.

"And I will never, never, never leave the car," she replied, fervently.

Given these conditions, it was, on the face of it, impossible for them to separate.

Arthur wrapped a rug over Parks.

He thought of something to say, some good, reliable old tag which he knew.

"These are amazing times, Miss Parks," he began. "Transformations take place."

Little Parks smiled.

"Oh, Mr. Arthur," said she, in a cuddly voice, "I have been trying to make myself worthy of you ever since it happened."

Arthur looked into little Parks's face, which was dimpling all over.

"Eh?" said he, slowly.

Little Parks put a hand into her overcoat pocket. Her shoulder, as she moved, touched Arthur's. Extremely close together, they gazed at the object she laid in her lap.

It was a pink glass ice-plate.

"I didn't ought to have been in the conservatory," said little Parks, whispering deliciously, "but I wanted to see the dresses; and that corner was so dark, and I thought nobody wanted it; and then! And *then!*"

"And *then!*" replied Arthur, in a tone curiously tender.

It was, after all, very little trouble. No turmoil; nothing unpleasant. It could not be described as an effort, anyway.

"You are used to me," said little Parks, softly, very dimpled; "it won't be any kind of upset. When I told you Fate would follow you, I meant," and here she uttered her first and last epigram, "Fate is a sort of a habit."

The pink souvenir lay on her lap. But she never showed Arthur the little murderous pliers in her pocket.

A baby moon appeared.

After all, there must come a time when the shyest of men gives thanks where they are due for the pretty heritage of original sin; and behaves naturally.

Life on a Battleship.

By E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT.

Illustrated by C. M. Padday.

II.

TORPEDOED ON THE 'MAJESTIC.

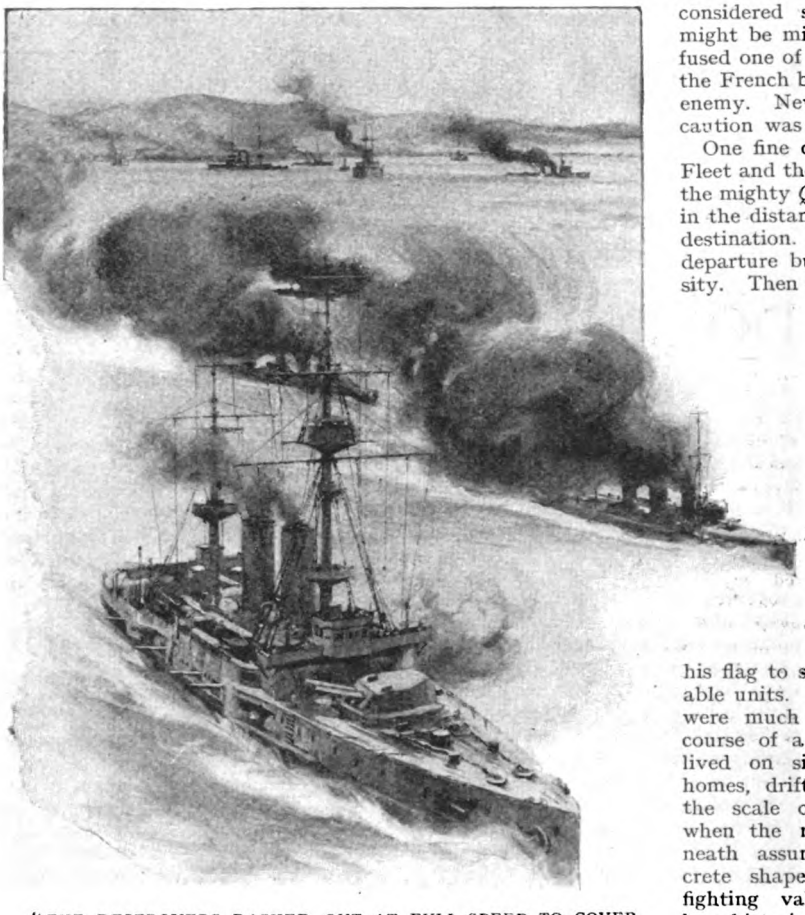
I DO not suppose that any race except the English would have attempted the expedition to the Dardanelles, and I am quite certain that no other nation would have persisted in it so long, after the many obstacles and set-backs we encountered from the start.

The first attempt to force the passage on March 18th with the Fleet alone was considered by most of the minor nations of the Near East as sufficient proof of our madness; the actual landing from ships in the face of an unbroken enemy and the storming of forts and field works covered by barbed wire confirmed the impression of our state of mind already formed, and it was only when we proved our ability to hold the positions thus won in the face of a great superiority of numbers that it began to dawn on the many interested spectators in the Near East that there was method in our madness after all. As a nation we have a peculiar habit of conceiving great schemes and rushing into them at a moment's notice without counting the cost, relying on the bravery of our troops to see us through the initial stages, the remarkable aptitude which as a nation we have always displayed for educating ourselves to conditions of which we had only formed the most rudimentary idea, and in the wonderful ability of our officers and men to adapt themselves to new surroundings.

Continental general staffs strike with the blunt end of the wedge, relying on the first blow to break down all opposition. We have seen this over and over again in the case of Germany. But if the first blow fails, there is no further weight behind the movement, and the situation remains in *statu quo*. But we always strike with the thin end of the wedge, one sharpened so finely that it seems impossible for it to inflict any real injury on the victim of our choice. We do this because the thick end is very seldom ready at the moment we strike, and we have to pile up weight gradually behind our first lunge. The Dardanelles Expedition is a good case in point. At our first lunge the thin end snapped altogether, leaving two of our battleships and one of the French at the bottom of the Dardanelles, whilst several others were seriously damaged. At first this reverse seemed final and crushing in the eyes of the Near Eastern spectators. To them a battleship, whether new or old, is the last word in a nation's glory and power. She must be guarded as a sacred thing and never risked except in circumstances of the most dire necessity. From that date the expedition was regarded as doomed to failure. We sought for Allies, but they were loath to throw in their lot with what appeared to be a losing, or even an already lost, cause. Then when the Army, inadequate in numbers, appeared on the scene, the curiosity of the Near East was again aroused, but few believed we should succeed. After the landing this pessimism tempered with curiosity gradually changed to admiration.

At the Dardanelles the Navy was responsible for every man, biscuit, and round of ammunition put on shore, and it also had to guard the flanks of the Army. Who would be an admiral in an expedition like this? His responsibilities are enormous, but he can no more control each individual unit of his fleet than he can control fate. A battleship was necessary to protect the right flank of the French Army. We shared this duty in turn with the French Fleet. On May 13th the *Goliath*, engaged on this dangerous work, was torpedoed three times on a dark night and sank in three minutes, only an odd hundred of her crew being saved. Steps are immediately taken to insure that such an occurrence shall not happen again. The right wing of the Army is told it must take care of itself during the night, and ships are withdrawn from this danger-point up the Straits. For a few days our admirals enjoy a respite, and then the most sinister of all our enemies appears on the scene, one who had it in his power to change the character of the campaign.

The true history of the voyage of the German submarines from their bases, and their gradual approach to and final arrival off the Dardanelles, will make one of the most fascinating stories of the war when it comes to be written. One cannot help admiring the enterprise shown by their commanders, and the skill with which they must have organized their depots of oil beforehand. On the other hand, I am inclined to think, judging from what our ships accomplished up the Dardanelles, in the Sea of Marmora, and actually in the harbour of Constantinople, that had English submarines ever had similar



"THE DESTROYERS DASHED OUT AT FULL SPEED TO COVER THIS MASS OF VESSELS, THROWING UP DENSE COLUMNS OF BLACK SMOKE AS THEY INCREASED THEIR SPEED."

opportunities, they would have accomplished far more than the German boats have done up to date.

Our Fleet and transports lay anchored off an exposed coast, faced with the menace from the Straits which prevented their taking shelter up there, whilst from the outside these monsters of the deep could approach from the shelter of innumerable islands and little harbours, not to mention Smyrna and other Turkish ports.

The Fleet was quite happy as it lay off Cape Helles, until the first vague rumours reached us of hostile submarines having been sighted passing Gibraltar. Then came another rumour that one had been seen off Malta, and later on another was reported as passing the Doro Channel, and then sighted again off Matapan. At first the evidence was not really credited. It was not denied by the naval experts that the new German submarines could not reach the Dardanelles without taking in fresh oil, but the character of the evidence was not considered altogether satisfactory. It came from trawlers or small transports, and those who made the reports were not considered skilled experts, and might be mistaken or have confused one of our boats, or one of the French boats, for those of the enemy. Nevertheless, every precaution was taken.

One fine day the pride of the Fleet and the terror of the Turks, the mighty *Queen Elizabeth*, faded in the distance to some unknown destination. We mourned her departure but realized the necessity. Then other vessels of good fighting capacity were seen less and less, or only for short periods off the shore, and faded away into distant ports or protected harbours. Every day the evidence of the near presence of the enemy became more certain and assumed a more definite form. Our admiral was continually transferring his flag to smaller and less valuable units. My own experiences were much the same. In the course of a short two months I lived on six different floating homes, drifting gradually down the scale of antiquity. Thus, when the menace from underneath assumed a definite, concrete shape no ships of great fighting value, although many bore historic names, remained off the coast. The remainder of the Fleet, having accomplished its assigned task in accordance with the pre-arranged plan, departed for other spheres of activity. Those that remained carried on the old work just as if nothing had happened, and with the same precision and coolness in the face of danger which is the envy and wonder of the balancing neutrals in the Near East. The *Triumph*, *Swiftsure*, *Majestic*, *Prince George*, *Albion*, *Canopus*, and *Cornwallis*, with Palinure's unaltered mood, remained at their dangerous posts together with the cruisers, destroyers, torpedo-boats, and submarines. The spirit of the Navy remains unchanged whatever the dangers which confront it. I do not think I can describe it better than by quoting what was found by the Censor in the letter of a young bluejacket.

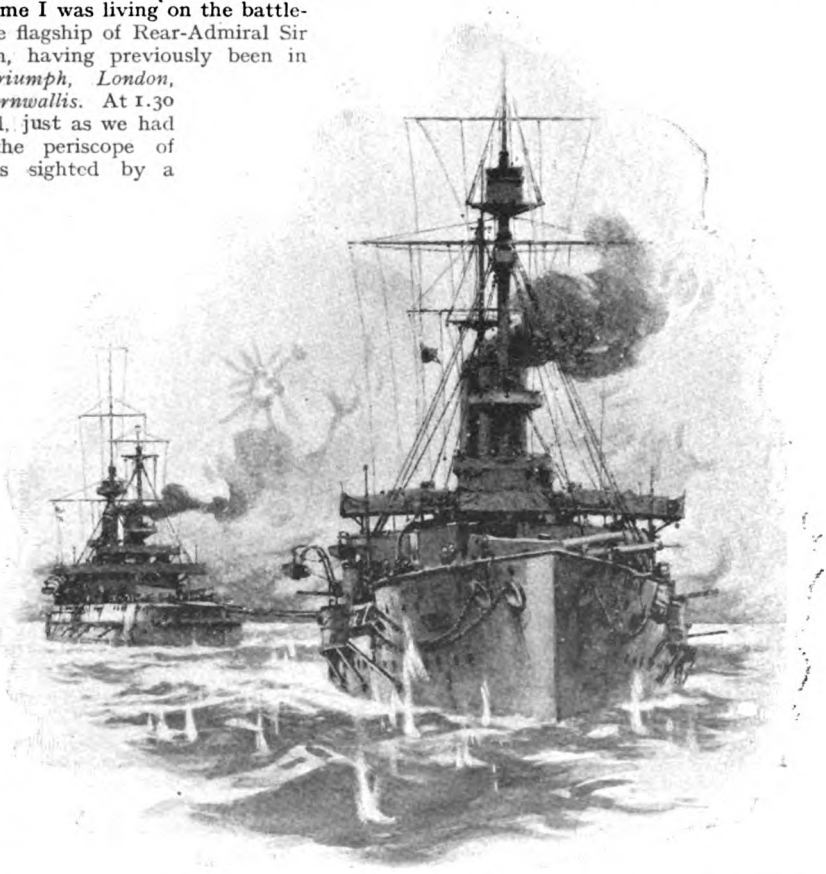
"Mother, it is sometimes very hot out here when the shells are dropping all about you and the submarines are hovering round and you may strike a mine at any minute. At first I was a bit scared, but I remembered the words of the *padre* last Sunday, when he said, 'Men, men, in times of trial and danger look upwards.' I did look upwards, mother, and if there

wasn't a bally aeroplane dropping bombs on us."

By one of those strange ironies which even the most astute of minds could not have foreseen, all the hard work, dangers, and strain of these naval operations off the Dardanelles fell not on the young and vigorous manhood of the Fleet, to whom constant risks and fresh excitements are as the breath of life, but on the old, home-rooted reservists, who were called back to the Colours to man this auxiliary fleet at the outbreak of war. The ships were the oldest of veterans, and so were their crews. In some of the ships there was hardly an active-service rating on the upper deck. There were many men between forty-eight and fifty-six years of age. Whilst thousands of an age peculiarly eligible were hanging back, hundreds of fathers and grandfathers were protecting them out at the Dardanelles, working all day and sometimes all night at incessant physical toil, or facing their guns, mines, and submarines. Yet they did not grumble or complain.

It was on May 22nd, 1915, that the actual presence of submarines in the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles was proved beyond a shadow of doubt. At this time I was living on the battleship *Swiftsure*, the flagship of Rear-Admiral Sir Stewart Nicholson, having previously been in turn on the *Triumph*, *London*, *Implacable*, and *Cornwallis*. At 1.30 p.m. on May 22nd, just as we had finished lunch, the periscope of a submarine was sighted by a destroyer, and also from the battleship *Prince George*, approaching from the direction of Rabbit Island. The *Prince George* fired two rounds, which had the effect of making her dive. The danger was imminent, as all the battleships, cruisers, and transports were at anchor, and presented a splendid target. Immediately the destroyers, whose duty it is to guard the Fleet, dashed out at full speed to cover this mass of vessels, throwing up dense columns of black smoke as they increased their speed. They hunted up and down the spot where she had first been sighted, endeavouring to ram her or to force her to rise and disclose her position.

As if by magic every battleship and every transport in a position to do so weighed anchor and steamed away at full speed. It was a weird sight, and also had its humorous side; for a stranger suddenly coming upon the scene might have thought that the whole Fleet had gone suddenly mad. Every vessel was steaming about at full speed, not in any fixed course, but describing circles and half circles, then turning in their tracks, or dashing madly to port or starboard, determined at all events not to allow their elusive enemy the chance of a straight shot. But the submarine did not appear again that day, and the alarm having subsided, we returned to our anchorage, whilst the indefatigable destroyers formed a moving cordon round the Fleet. That night all the vessels whose presence off the coast was not essential were ordered to various points for safety, but the *Swiftsure* remained at her old anchorage off Cape Helles together with some of the older battleships, whilst the *Canopus*, *Vengeance*, and *Albion* patrolled the coast round the



"PERSEVERANCE AND THE TOWING OF THE 'CANOPUS' PREVAILED, AND WE HAD THE GREAT SATISFACTION OF SEEING THE TWO VESSELS GLIDE INTO DEEP WATER."

Australian positions at Gaba Tepe, but did not anchor.

The first fruits of the submarine menace were seen on the following morning when the battleship *Albion* went ashore south of Gaba Tepe in a local fog at 4 a.m. As soon as it became light the Turkish field batteries opened up a tremendous bombardment on her, but fortunately they could not bring any heavy guns or howitzers to bear. One of the Turkish battleships up the Straits, probably the *Barbarossa*, fired a few rounds of eleven-inch without scoring a hit, and was herself driven away by one of our battleships. Alarmist reports on the condition of the *Albion* reached us at dawn on the *Swiftsure*, but they fortunately turned out to be without foundation. When the light became stronger, we on the *Swiftsure* could see her lying close inland, and the enemy's shrapnel bursting all around her.

"HAVE JUST SIGHTED NEW TYPE OF SUBMARINE HAVING NO LESS THAN FOUR PERISCOPES."

Amongst other vessels which went to her aid was the yacht *Triad*, which also came in for a heavy fire, and was hit several times. In fact, this yacht, Admiral de Roebeck's new flagship, without any armour or protection, behaved with the greatest gallantry, as also did the destroyers. About 4.30 a.m. the battleship *Canopus*, which has played such a gallant and varied *rôle* all over the world in this war, stood in close to the *Albion* and got a wire hawser aboard, and attempted to tow her off under a very heavy fire, but the cable immediately snapped. Two others were, however, made fast, and the towing recommenced. The crew of the *Albion* were all ordered aft and made to jump on the quarter-deck to try and shift her bows off the sandbank; at the same time the *Albion's* foreturret and fore six-inch guns opened up a tremendous bombardment on the Turkish positions to lighten the ship and to try and shift her by the concussion of the guns. For a long time all these efforts were of no avail, but in the end, at about 10 a.m., perseverance and the towing of the *Canopus* prevailed, and we had the great satisfaction of seeing the two vessels glide slowly into deep water without either having suffered much harm.

The remainder of the day passed without any further definite news of the enemy's submarines, That night we remained at our old anchorage off Cape Helles.

On the following day, May 24th, there was an armistice at Gaba Tepe for the burial of the dead, but we had further scares of submarines off Southern Gallipoli. Everyone was, in fact, on the *qui vive* and determined not to be caught napping, so that any object in the water was apt to be taken for a periscope. Thus alarms were caused by floating tins, empty barrels, a water-logged boat, and more than once by the bodies of dead horses, which have an inconvenient and most objectionable habit of floating with one of their legs in the air, which exactly resembles the periscope of a submarine. In connection with the dead horse scare, Admiral de Roebeck told me an amusing story of a young destroyer commander who brought his boat at full speed into harbour and at once made the following signal to the flagship: "Have just sighted new type of submarine having no less than four periscopes. On my firing at her, and I believe hitting her, she immediately proceeded to emit large quantities of poisoned gas."

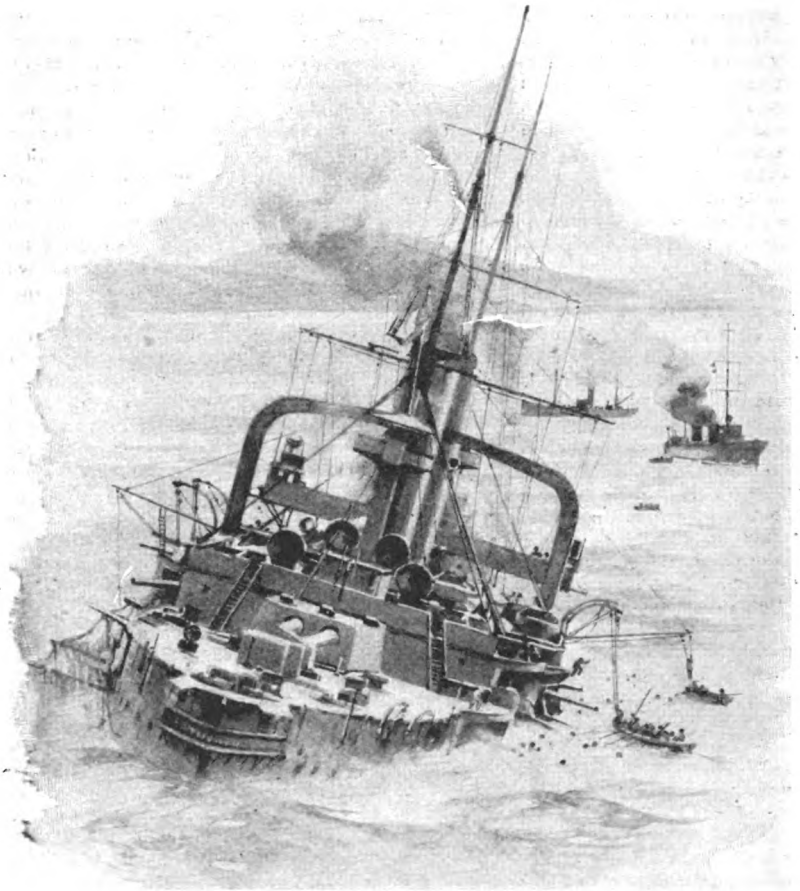
What, may be asked, was the effect of these continual alarms on the crews of our ships, and what are the feelings of the average individual when he has to pass day after day, night after night, expecting to be blown up by an enemy he cannot even see? They vary according to the character of the crew. On a ship like the *Swiftsure*, carrying nearly all active-service ratings, highly disciplined and as keen as mustard, the whole thing seemed to be regarded as a form of

sport. The men actually got up a sweepstake, the winner to be the first man who actually sighted a periscope. There was, in fact, the greatest keenness on board to stamp out these pests. The fourteen-pounders were kept loaded, with their crews on watch by day, and asleep around them at night, ready to fire at a moment's notice. Mixed up with this feeling of menace and invisible danger, there is also a sense of the ridiculous, which lends a humorous aspect to the affair. You feel so strong and powerful on a battleship solidly protected by armour that it seems unreal and unnatural that a small craft "somewhere under the Mediterranean," manned by about thirty officers and men, should have it in her power to inflict on you a vital injury without any warning. You feel much the same as Goliath must have felt just before the fatal stone came whizzing from David's sling. You have an impression in your mind that although the elusive little beggar may possibly sink another ship, he could never do any harm to the one you are on. Or, at least, this was my feeling until the enemy struck his first deadly blow. Then there is the never-failing amusement caused by the various ways each individual on board provides for his own safety. The number and variety of the life-belts carried is endless. Some believe in a collar which is blown out and worn round the neck. Someone else will tell you confidentially that two men, who by way of experiment jumped into the water with these on, both had their necks broken. Others carry belts which resemble bicycle tyres cut in half. You blow these out and tie them round your waist, either on deck or after you have reached the water. But the Gieve waistcoats are the most popular of all. They are an ordinary waistcoat which you can wear under your coat, and which, when the emergency arises, you blow out through a tube in the form of a life-belt all round you. Others declare all life-belts hamper your movements in the water, and prefer to trust to their swimming powers. It is certainly amusing to see a lot of thin officers and men suddenly swelling to gigantic proportions in moments of danger as they quietly blow up their waistcoats underneath their coats. The older crews, consisting chiefly of reservists, feel the strain of this constant submarine menace more than those manned by the active-service ratings.

Events now developed fast. At eight o'clock on the morning of May 25th I was down below on the *Swiftsure* when I suddenly heard two fourteen-pounders fired in rapid succession, and the sound of men running to their stations. On going on deck I found the alarm had been caused by the periscope of a submarine which had appeared on our port bow only three hundred yards away. Our alert gunners did not lose a second, but fired at her, and she disappeared below the surface. Why she did not discharge a torpedo remains a mystery, as she had our ship as a target only three hundred yards off, and also the *Majestic* and *Agamemnon* quite close. It is thought she was trying to make the entrance to the Dardanelles and came up blind amongst the ships, and was scared by our guns, the small craft, trawlers, and destroyers all around, before she could lay on any target. But we all knew we had escaped disaster by a hair's breadth. Of course, the alarm was immediately given, and our destroyers were off after her like a flash. A little later she was reported to be making towards Gaba Tepe. At 10.30 a.m. the battleship *Vengeance*, which was cruising up and down in that direction, reported she had been fired at but missed—another most lucky escape. There were also rumours of another submarine having been reported off Rabbit Island; so it seemed there were two in the immediate neighbourhood.

I had occasion to go on shore that morning and did not return until lunch-time.

We were all at lunch in the wardroom of the *Swiftsure* when a signalman entered with his cap in his hand and went up to the Commander, saying, "Beg pardon, sir, the *Triumph* is listing." This news came as a thunderbolt, and everyone left his luncheon and rushed up on the quarter-deck. The news was indeed true. The *Triumph* was at anchor off the coast in her old position south of Gaba Tepe when she was struck by two torpedoes. Her nets were down at the time, but made not the slightest difference, as both torpedoes either passed through or else underneath them. When we reached the deck she was already listing, and it was obvious she would turn right over in a few minutes. On these occasions one battleship is not allowed to go to the assistance of another, through fear of being torpedoed by the same submarine, which will probably remain hanging about in the neighbourhood awaiting just such a chance. In any case, the *Swiftsure* was at anchor, and we could never have got there in time. When she was struck there was a trawler and a destroyer quite close to the *Triumph*, and these two vessels at once went to her assistance to pick up the crew, whom we could see jumping off the side into the water. All the destroyers off Cape Helles, in our neighbourhood, also got up steam and dashed at top speed across the ocean, almost blotting out the horizon with the columns of black smoke thrown out by their eager funnels. It was a dramatic sight from the quarter-deck of the *Swiftsure*, and also on the quarter-deck itself. The two vessels are sister-ships, having been purchased from Chile to prevent their sale to Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, and we on board all had in mind our narrow escape that very morning when the periscope of this same submarine had arisen within three hundred yards of us. The Admiral came on deck, together with all the other officers, and all stood in a silent group behind their chief, gazing at the stricken battleship some four miles away. The scene resembled Orchardson's picture of the "Last Sight of France of Napoleon and his Comrades on Board the *Bellerophon*." The *Triumph* was listing more and more over. She seemed to be struggling against some horrid invisible monster which was dragging her slowly down. Elsewhere the scene remained the same. Our guns were bombarding the Turkish positions and theirs were leisurely responding. Off Gaba Tepe you could see the other warships keeping



"WHEN THE 'TRIUMPH' WAS STRUCK THERE WAS A TRAWLER AND A DESTROYER QUITE CLOSE, AND THESE TWO VESSELS AT ONCE WENT TO HER ASSISTANCE TO PICK UP THE CREW."

their customary stations, whilst all around us at the entrance of the Straits lay our transports and warships and those of the French. The thought involuntarily occurred, "Whose turn will come next?" For seven minutes the group on the deck of the *Swiftsure* watched the dying struggle of the *Triumph* in absolute silence. Then suddenly she seemed to grow weary of the hopeless fight against these invisible forces, and exactly eight minutes after being struck she gave a final roll and turned upside down, her red bottom alone remaining visible. For half an hour we watched her floating bottom upwards, and then suddenly she gave a final plunge and disappeared for ever beneath the waves amidst boiling surf and clouds of steam. "The *Triumph* has gone," remarked the admiral, slowly shutting up his telescope and turning on his heel to return to his quarters. The group on the quarter-deck immediately dispersed, each to his own reflections on this tragic event.

The sinking of the *Triumph* caused a fresh and very serious problem for the Admiral Commanding-in-Chief. As long as this submarine or submarines remained in the neighbourhood he could not leave his battleships exposed off the coast to their attacks, whilst at the same time he had to consider the needs of the Army and the amount of artillery support which the general might require to keep down the fire of the Turkish batteries on the European and Asiatic shores. Immediately after the crew of the *Triumph*, of whom some sixty were drowned, had been picked up and transferred to trawlers, the whole of the available destroyer craft started a tremendous hunt after the enemy. Throughout the early part of the afternoon reports kept on coming in of her movements. First, she was said to be making her way south from Gaba Tepe towards Cape Helles, and everyone on the *Swiftsure* remained on the alert, as we were still at anchor and had no nets, even if these old nets offer any protection, which is extremely doubtful. At three-thirty it was decided to send the *Swiftsure* back to the protected harbour, Mudros, and for the Admiral to transfer his flag to the twenty-year-old *Majestic*, which was now the only battleship left off Cape Helles. She lay at anchor a few hundred yards from us with her nets down. It took a very short time to transfer the admiral's baggage to his new quarters, and after bidding farewell to the officers of the *Swiftsure* he was rowed across to the *Majestic*, and the *Swiftsure* shortly afterwards disappeared at top speed, reaching her new destination without mishap. The admiral took me with him to his new flagship. The *Majestic* was the oldest British man-of-war at the Dardanelles, having been launched just over twenty years ago. Then she was the

pride of the British Fleet, the envy of all foreign nations, and at once became flagship of the Channel Squadron. For years, in fact, she remained a flagship, until superseded by vessels of superior power. But her glory had long since departed, and for several years before the present war she had been practically on the scrap-heap, and was actually waiting to be sold out of the service at the commencement of the present struggle. But necessity knows no age-limit. When the expedition to the Dardanelles was decided upon she was refitted and a crew, consisting chiefly of old reservists, was placed on board her, whilst most of her officers were also drawn from the R.N.R. Out in the Mediterranean she had done her full share of work up the Straits and bombarding the enemy's positions. In fact, it may be said of her as was said of Cicero, "Nothing in her life became her as her end." Now, for the last forty-eight hours of her existence, owing to the immense influence of hostile submarines on naval operations, the old *Majestic*, the veteran of the Fleet, after twenty-five years of laborious and honourable service all over the world, found herself once more a flagship proudly flying the rear-admiral's flag, and the only battleship left off Cape Helles to protect our army ashore and to brave the terrors of the enemy's submarines.

That afternoon Admiral de Robeck came down to Cape Helles to hold a consultation with the rear-admiral, and the two commanders met, the one on the *Majestic* and the other on a small yacht bought from a resident of Constantinople earlier in the war. Such is the malign influence exercised by submarines. Throughout the afternoon of May 25th our destroyers kept up their unceasing chase of the hostile craft or crafts. They were sighted more than once beneath the surface, but at too great a depth to ram, and after 4.40 p.m. were seen no more. Throughout the day the old *Majestic* remained defiantly at her post with the admiral's flag proudly flying from her foremast. At eight o'clock that evening we were told we were not to remain at anchor off Cape Helles, but were to run to shelter to the protected island of Imbros. Escorted by four destroyers, we dashed at top speed across the moonlit ocean, the old vessel doing wonderful time considering her age and the wear on her engines. In fact, someone remarked, "She never did as well as this on her original trials." That night, at midnight, there was another scare that the enemy's submarines were trying to get through the boom. The crew were called to their stations, but the alarm came to naught, and probably only belonged to the vivid and harassed imaginations of those on the destroyers guarding the entrance.

On the following day, the last of her existence, the *Majestic* returned to her old anchorage off Cape Helles, to resume her chaperoning of the troops on shore. I do not think we had any submarine scares that day, and towards evening there seemed to be a general feeling that at any rate for the time being the enemy had been driven off or forced to retire to some base for oil and stores. But everyone on board felt our security was only temporary, and that very shortly the submarines would again show their periscopes in our neighbourhood. That evening, May 26th, we did not go back to a sheltered port, but moved in closer to the shore in front of W. beach, so that instead of being outside the lines of transports we were actually anchored inside the outer line in a position where it would be extremely difficult for a submarine to get a clear shot at us. I remember remarking at the time, "that in former days the British Navy protected British commerce, but that now, owing to the presence of submarines, British commerce had to protect the British Navy."

Now that I come to describe the last hours of the poor old *Majestic*, I can only tell the story of what my own experiences were, and of what I saw of the vessel and crew when she finally plunged to her doom. Personally, although we had moved so close in shore and inside the outer line of transports, I felt no great sense of security, and was perfectly certain that the end might come at any moment. For that reason I had not slept in my cabin for several nights, neither on the *Swiftsure*, but had my mattress carried up on deck, having long since made up my mind to get off the ship the moment she was struck and swim as far away as possible before she turned over and made her final plunge. As I do not profess to be a great swimmer, I was determined not to get mixed up on her decks or dragged down by the suction. That night we sat up rather later than usual in the wardroom, and feeling the end was near we drank the few remaining bottles of champagne on board. I was just retiring to rest when I met the principal medical officer, who asked me if I had a life-belt. I was the possessor of one of those which resemble bicycle tyres, and kept it blown up in my cabin, but it was inclined to leak, so I told the P.M.O. I could do with another. He presented me with a similar one, only quite new. In fact, it had never been blown out.

I then retired to my cabin, undressed, put a little money in notes in my pocket, carefully wrapped up all my invaluable notes I had made on the campaign in a waterproof coat, and placed them in a small leather bag, which unfortunately I left below and did not take with me on deck. It was a beautiful night, clear and bright, with the sea as calm as a lake. I went up on the after shelter deck, which is just above the after turret, where my mattress had been placed, lay down, and was soon soundly asleep. I do not think I woke up once during the night and slept soundly until six-fifteen, and when I called out to the sentry, "What's the time?" he replied, "Six fifteen, sir." So I turned over and went to sleep again. The subsequent times I learnt after the catastrophe, as they were all taken from the shore. It was at six-forty that I was aroused by men rushing by me and someone trod on or stumbled against my chest. This awoke me, and I called out, "What's the matter?" A voice replied from somewhere, "There's a torpedo coming." I just had time to scramble to my feet when there came a dull, heavy explosion about fifteen feet forward of the shelter deck on the

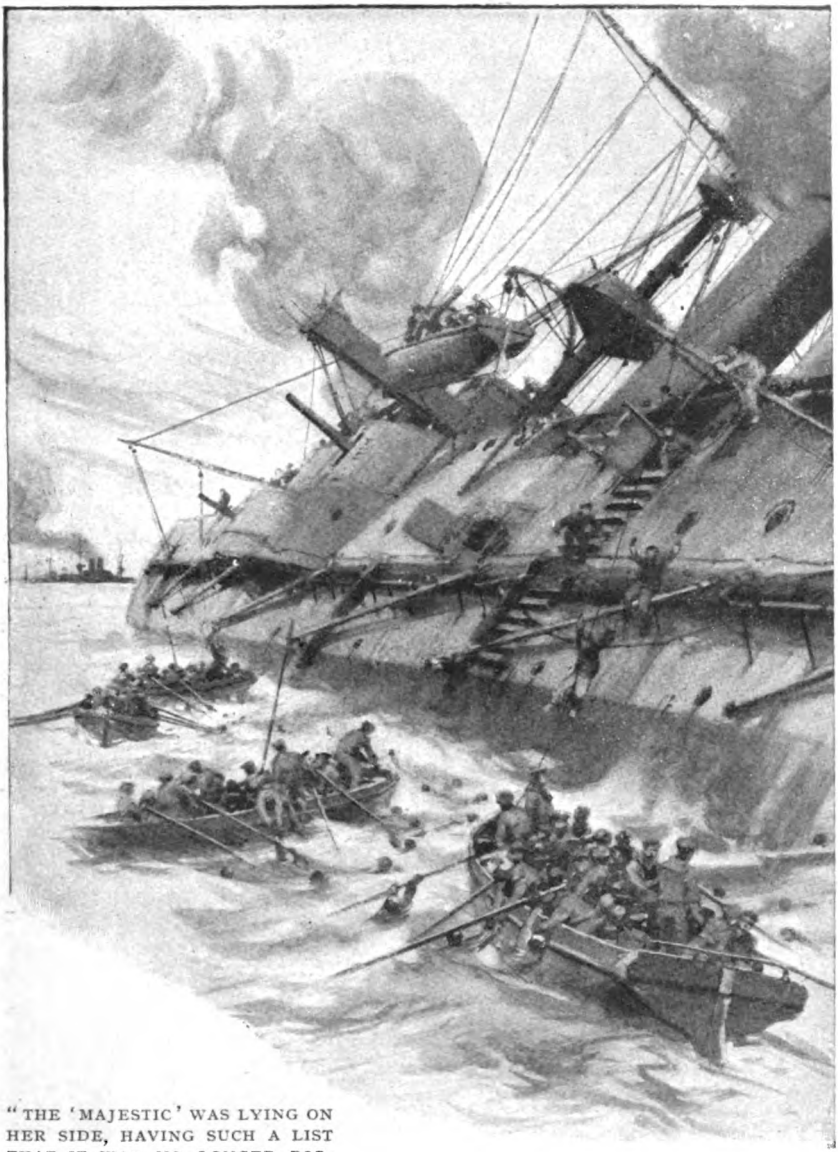
port side. The explosion must have been very low down, as there was no shock from it to be felt on deck. The old *Majestic* immediately gave a jerk over towards port, and remained with a heavy list. Then there came a sound as if the contents of every pantry in the world had fallen at the same moment. I never before heard such a clattering as everything loose in her tumbled about. You could tell at once she had been mortally wounded somewhere in her vitals, and you felt instinctively she would not long stay afloat.

Although I had been prepared for days for just such an emergency, the actual realization came as a great shock. However, having mapped out my programme in advance, I proceeded to carry it through. I stooped down to pick up my life-belt, and then to my intense disgust I discovered it was not blown out. When the principal medical officer presented it to me on the previous evening I had intended to do so, but must have forgotten all about it. Thus the first part of my plans—namely, not to take the water unless encircled by a good belt—was at once knocked on the head. I decided not to lose any time over it now, but to get off the ship at once, as she was listing more over and seemed likely to turn turtle at any moment. I was swept down the ladder to the main deck by the crowd rushing by me, and from there made my way aft to the quarter-deck. The quarter-deck was crowded with men nearly all dressed, and many wearing life-belts, who were climbing over the side and jumping into the sea, all determined to get clear before she went down. Just after the explosion a cloud of black smoke came up and got down my throat and in my eyes, so that all this time I seemed to be in semi-darkness. I looked over the side and saw that I was clear of the torpedo-nets, and then climbed over, intending to slide down a stanchion into the water and then swim clear. But again my programme was upset by unforeseen events, for just as I had both legs over the rail there came a rush from behind and I was pushed over the side, falling with considerable force on to the net-shelf, which is where the nets are stowed when not out. I made no long stay on the net-shelf, but at once rebounded into the sea and went under. I came up at once still holding my useless belt, and having got some of the water out of my eyes took a look round. The sea was crowded with men swimming about and calling for assistance. I think that many of these old reservists who formed the majority of the crew had forgotten how to swim, or else had lost all faith in their own powers. A few yards from me I saw a boat, towards which everyone in the water seemed to be making. She was already packed with men, whilst others were hanging on to her gunwale. I swam towards her, mixed up with a struggling crowd, and managed to get both hands firmly on the gunwale, but it was impossible to drag myself on board. I looked round at the *Majestic*, which was lying only a few yards away at an acute angle, and I remember thinking that if she turned right over our boat would probably be dragged under with her. It is very tiring work hanging on by both hands with your feet trailing in the water, and I was beginning to wonder whether I should not be wiser to let go and swim away when my right foot caught in what is known as a "mangrip" on the bilge keel. This is a small slit in the keel which enables you to hang on in the event of the boat being overturned. This gave me a lot of additional support, and I felt much more comfortable. A minute later, or even less, a sailor leaned over the side, seized me by the shoulders, and dragged me inside, scraping the little remaining skin I had saved from the fall on the net-shelf off my legs and arms. However, at the time I was too delighted to find myself on board to notice such minor trials. I then had time to look round. The boat was absolutely packed with men. She was a small cutter, intended to carry at the most thirty, and eventually ninety-four were taken off her. We were sitting on one another, others were standing up, and many were still clinging on to the gunwale, begging to be taken on board, which was, of course, out of the question.

The *Majestic* now presented an extraordinary spectacle. She was lying over on her side, having such a list that it was no longer possible to stand on her deck. About one-third of the crew still seemed to be hanging on to the rails, or standing on her side, as if hesitating to jump into the sea. All around the sea was full of men, some swimming towards neighbouring ships, others apparently having their work cut out to keep themselves afloat. All the vessels in the neighbourhood were lowering boats, and many steam launches were hastening to pick up survivors, but they did not dare stand in too close for fear of being dragged under in the final plunge. I was just thinking what a magnificent photograph the scene would make when someone called out, "If you don't loose that rope you will be dragged under." I am told it was Captain Talbot, who was still hanging on to the quarter-deck, saw the danger we were in and gave the warning just in time. For in the general confusion we had not noticed that our boat was attached by a rope to the end of the torpedo-boom. In fact, she belonged to the *Majestic*, and had been lying out all night. This discovery caused great excitement on board, and many to escape this imminent disaster preferred to entrust themselves once more to the sea, jumping overboard with oars in their hands. I was hesitating whether to follow suit, when someone in the bows managed to clear or cut the rope, and we were free. A very few seconds later the *Majestic* rolled right over to port and sank bottom upwards like a great stone, without any further warning. There came a dull, rumbling sound, a swirl of water and steam, for a moment her green bottom was exposed to view, and then the old flagship disappeared for ever, except for a small piece of her ram, which remained above water, as her bows were lying on a shallow sand-bank. As she turned over and sank a sailor ran the whole length of her keel, and finally sat astride the ram, where he was subsequently taken off without even getting a wetting. The final plunge was so sad, but grand, that for a few

seconds you forgot about the large numbers of officers and men who were still clinging to her like limpets when she went down.

Some were dragged down by the fatal nets before they could get clear; others were probably killed inside by the explosion. Nevertheless, the loss of life was small, numbering only fifty. This was due to the fact that most of the men had life-belts. The majority had time to clear the ship before she turned over; we were anchored in shallow water, so the suction was small, and, above all, assistance was promptly forthcoming from the numerous ships, boats, and launches which hastened to pick up those struggling in the water. The final plunge was watched by thousands of troops on shore and by thousands of men afloat. It was a sight which will not easily be forgotten. Captain Talbot, the moment the ship was struck, rushed forward with his yeoman of signals to seize and either save or destroy the confidential signal book. This was accomplished, and then when the ship went down he was thrown into the water, but was picked up by a launch. Then, seeing two of his men in danger of drowning, he plunged into the sea again and saved them both.



"THE 'MAJESTIC' WAS LYING ON HER SIDE, HAVING SUCH A LIST THAT IT WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO STAND ON HER DECK."

Of course, it was impossible to tell until late in the day who had been saved and who had been drowned, as the survivors were picked up by various boats and taken to different ships or on shore and subsequently transferred to Mudros Bay. But happily every officer got clear, including Admiral Sir Stewart Nicholson. I was taken on board a French ship together with the ninety survivors from this crowded cutter, where we were received with every kindness and attention. Dry clothes were served out to us, and we were given coffee and brandy by our kind Allies.

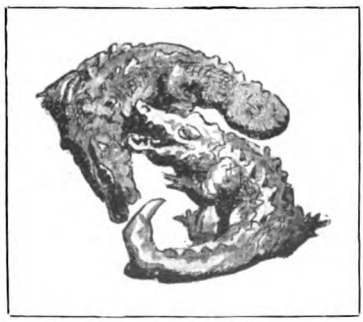
By a merciful dispensation of Providence, in the case of neither the *Triumph* nor the *Majestic* did the magazines blow up, otherwise there would have been hardly any survivors. As it was, owing to the prompt assistance forthcoming, the loss of life on both vessels was small, and was chiefly due to the causes I have already mentioned —namely, men being dragged down in the nets when they took the final plunge.

INEXPLICABLE

By L. G. MOBERLY.

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

THE hinges were rusty, the gate swinging to behind me creaked dismally, and as the latch clicked into its socket with a sharp clang I started. That clanging sound drew from the depths of my subconscious self some old stories of prison doors and turnkeys. And I actually glanced nervously over my shoulder at the suburban road which trailed to right and left of the gate I had just entered, although anything less calculated to inspire nervous tremors than that stretch of ordinary road lined by ordinary houses could not be imagined!



I had an order to view 119, Glazebrook Terrace, in the very unromantic suburb of Prillsbury, and I was seeking a house in that unromantic suburb merely because it was a healthy place within convenient distance of the London station to which my husband had to travel every morning. The rent of the house was decidedly low, if the house itself came up to the flowery description of it given by the house-agent; but I had made up my mind that this possibility was almost too good to be true. Nevertheless I confess I was surprised by the outside appearance of the houses in the terrace. They were solidly built, commodious-looking dwellings, and although the scrap of front garden belonging to No. 119 was in the last stages of neglect and weeds, and there was a generally unkempt air about the whole place, still, I reflected, as I walked up the grass-grown path, these faults could soon be remedied. And it was simply absurd to be obsessed by a feeling of traps or prison-bars just because the gate had creaked on its hinges and then clanged-to with a sharpness which gave me such a feeling of finality.

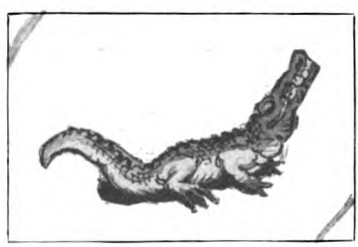
The house-agent's clerk, who waited for me on the steps with the key of the house, was as ordinary as the rest of the surroundings, and my unaccountable attack of nerves passed off under the influence of his self-assured and cockney accents. Like the generality of his profession, he was profuse in praises of the house I had come to see, and I was fain to confess that in this case the praise was not undeserved. No. 119 was a very delightful house, well arranged, well built, with a nice piece of garden at the back, and plenty of accommodation.

But I only discovered its merits after

literally wading through seas of dust, for never in the whole course of my existence have I seen any house so dusty as that house. Our feet sank into a thick powder; the windows were grimy, the walls coated, there must have been inches of dust upon every ledge capable of holding a grain of anything.

"I wonder the house has been allowed to get into this condition," I remarked to my guide when, having visited all the lower rooms, we stood in the big front bedroom; "it would surely have paid to put a caretaker into the place to keep it cleaned and aired."

"We found it——" he began, in his self-confident accents, and then he stopped short, and his very fair face flushed. "Messrs. Dyron did not consider it necessary," he said, rather hurriedly, and was then proceeding to explain to me how expeditiously the establishment could be put into liveable order, when my eye was attracted to a small table standing against the wall by the fireplace. It was octagonal in shape, set on three twisted legs—just a small occasional table such as one may see in any drawing-room. But the way in which it was carved was entirely out of the common, and I crossed the room to look at it more closely, exclaiming as I did so, "What a perfectly lovely piece of carving! Of course, this has been left here by mistake." And I turned the table more to the window to let the light fall upon it. The whole top was a crust of carved leaves and flowers, and in each curve of the octagon there was fashioned a small alligator, his head pointing outwards, his tail meeting the tails of the other crocodiles in the centre; and as the light fell full on the scaly bodies they had an extraordinary look of life, and the little sinister heads with the small evil eyes almost seemed to move. I shuddered and drew away from the table, and the voice of Messrs. Dyron's clerk seemed to come to me from quite a long way off.



"The table goes with the house," I heard him say; "it is really like a fixture, it goes with the house." I don't suppose he really said the words very often, but in the dimness that had temporarily descended upon my brain I thought he went on repeating, like a parrot-cry, "It goes with the house. It goes with the house." Then the dimness cleared away, and I heard him say quietly, whilst it struck me that his face was oddly white:—

"I am afraid you are tired, madam."

I passed my hand over my face. "I don't know," I said. "I think the house must be stuffy. Just for a moment I felt quite faint, and there is such a queer smell in here," I added, becoming all at once conscious of a strange and penetrating odour I had not before noticed. "The drains——"

"The drains were set in order before the last tenant vacated the house," my companion put in quickly. "I have the sanitary people's certificate about them. I fancy the smell you notice is due to the place having been shut up some time, and to the rankness of the creeper outside."

Well, what he said sounded reasonable, and when he flung the window open the smell disappeared, and I recovered from my momentary faintness. But I made up my mind that, much as I liked the house, I would have every drain carefully inspected again before I urged Hugh to take it. As I was leaving the front bedroom my mind went back to the carved table.

"Do you really mean to say the former tenants wish to leave that beautiful thing?" I asked. "I suppose they are not going to leave it for nothing?"

"Oh, yes," the young man answered, airily, as if exquisitely-carved tables were usually bestowed by outgoing upon incoming tenants; "they have simply left it as—as—well, as a fixture, or as lumber—whichever way one likes to look at it."

"I should prefer to look on it as a fixture," I said. "I can only conclude that its owners are most unusual people. Fancy parting with such an artistic piece of work! If we take the house—and I am very much inclined to think we shall—that table will not be left in a bedroom." The young man bowed acquiescently and looked from me to the table with an oddly sidelong glance.

Although my temporary faintness had passed off, and after the window was opened the queer smell in the room had also vanished, I was not sorry to be outside in the fresh air again, for that faintness had left me oddly shaken. However, I forgot all about it long before I reached home, and I was only anxious to impress upon my husband the many charms and conveniences of 119, Glazebrook Terrace. The more I thought about the house the more sure I was that it would suit us in every particular, and by the end of the evening I had planned out all the rooms and fitted our furniture into them. Hugh paid a

hurried visit to the house with me next day, and shared my enthusiasm. The windows were all open, there was no longer any strange smell, the sun was shining on our eager plans for the future; we ignored the present air of neglect and forlornness. And as for the table! My husband fell in love with it as much as I had done, and marvelled, as I had marvelled, how anyone in his senses could leave such a fine piece of work behind.

"So much the better for us," Hugh exclaimed gaily, his fingers running over the delicately-carved crust of flowers and leaves, and resting on the head of one of the alligators, a head fashioned with such skill that its loathsome naturalness made one shudder.

"Good heavens, May, the things look so life-like I could almost have sworn one of them squirmed." And Hugh stood back from the table, stared at it with round eyes, and then laughed. "I shall be seeing rats and snakes next," he said, and laughed again as we left the room together. Before we left the house that day we had definitely decided to take it, supposing the drains were all they should be and the lease a satisfactory one; and in a very few weeks we were actually able to move into our new abode. An expert had declared the drains to be entirely above reproach; no terms could have been easier than those of the lease; in every direction our way seemed to be smoothed for us, and Hugh and I agreed that we were most lucky to have got so wholly delightful a house with so little difficulty or expense. We turned in an army of workpeople, and by the middle of May the house was clean and fresh from attic to basement, the garden had lost its neglected appearance; and when at last we took up our abode there on a sunshiny afternoon, when the lilacs were in bloom and the thrushes singing their loudest, we felt that we had come there to stay, probably for the rest of our natural lives.

"That beautiful table is too good for a bedroom," Hugh exclaimed, as we were arranging the disposition of our furniture. "I'll cart it down to the drawing-room."

"Yes—do, dear," I answered absently, my thoughts busy over vital questions of curtains and carpets, "and open the windows wide as you pass—there is still a stuffy smell here. I believe it is those shrubs outside—I shall have them cut back more." But Hugh had already picked up the small table and vanished with it through the door, and I returned to my calculations, when a great crash interrupted the current of my thoughts—a crash and a sharp cry.

I rushed to the stairs, to see Hugh lying in the hall, the table standing beside him apparently uninjured. I was at my husband's side in a second; he pulled himself up with difficulty, but he could not get upon his feet, and his face was drawn with pain.

"Twisted my ankle or something," he said, trying to smile reassuringly; "there must have been a piece of carpet loose. Something seemed to slither between my feet, and I lost my balance. Good job I didn't break my neck," he added, philosophically, "and, anyhow, the table's all right."

Yes—the table was all right. The delicate carving was unbroken, the alligators lay there intact, grinning their sinister, malicious grin.

"Beastly things," Hugh said, looking at them with a queer little shiver, as I helped him to hobble into the drawing-room. "The chap who carved them was an artist, if you like."

Poor old Hugh! He was laid up for days with that bad ankle, and it fretted him to see me setting our house in order whilst he was tied by the leg.

"We certainly must have those shrubs cut back," he said to me the day after his fall, and he sniffed audibly; "there's a sort of smell in here of decaying vegetation. I dare say the shrubs have got a bit rank. Good Lord, what's that?" and he pulled himself upright on the couch, as from the small alligator table in the window there came a most prodigious crack. I confess I started too, for, accustomed as one is to the cracking of furniture, the sound did really seem gigantic to come from such a small object as the table.

"Very funny," Hugh said, eyeing the delicate carving and the grinning heads with a certain hostility. "I hate things that give one the jumps, and it was such a funny sort of crack, too," he added, thoughtfully; "more like—more like—what on earth was it like, May? Not exactly like the sound one associates with cracking furniture."

"Not quite like anything I ever heard before," I answered. "Perhaps the wood is some peculiar kind to which we are not accustomed. Now I know the table has tricks and manners of that kind, it won't startle me so much next time."

I keep no diary, but I think it must have been on a morning two days later that I found my usually neat cook in a strange state of dishevelment when I went downstairs to order dinner. My heart sank within me. The untidy gown, tousled hair, the general

air of having tumbled straight out of bed into the kitchen seemed to tell only one tale, and the horrible conviction that my hitherto sober Maria had been drinking became something like a certainty when she suddenly flung her apron over her head and began to sob.

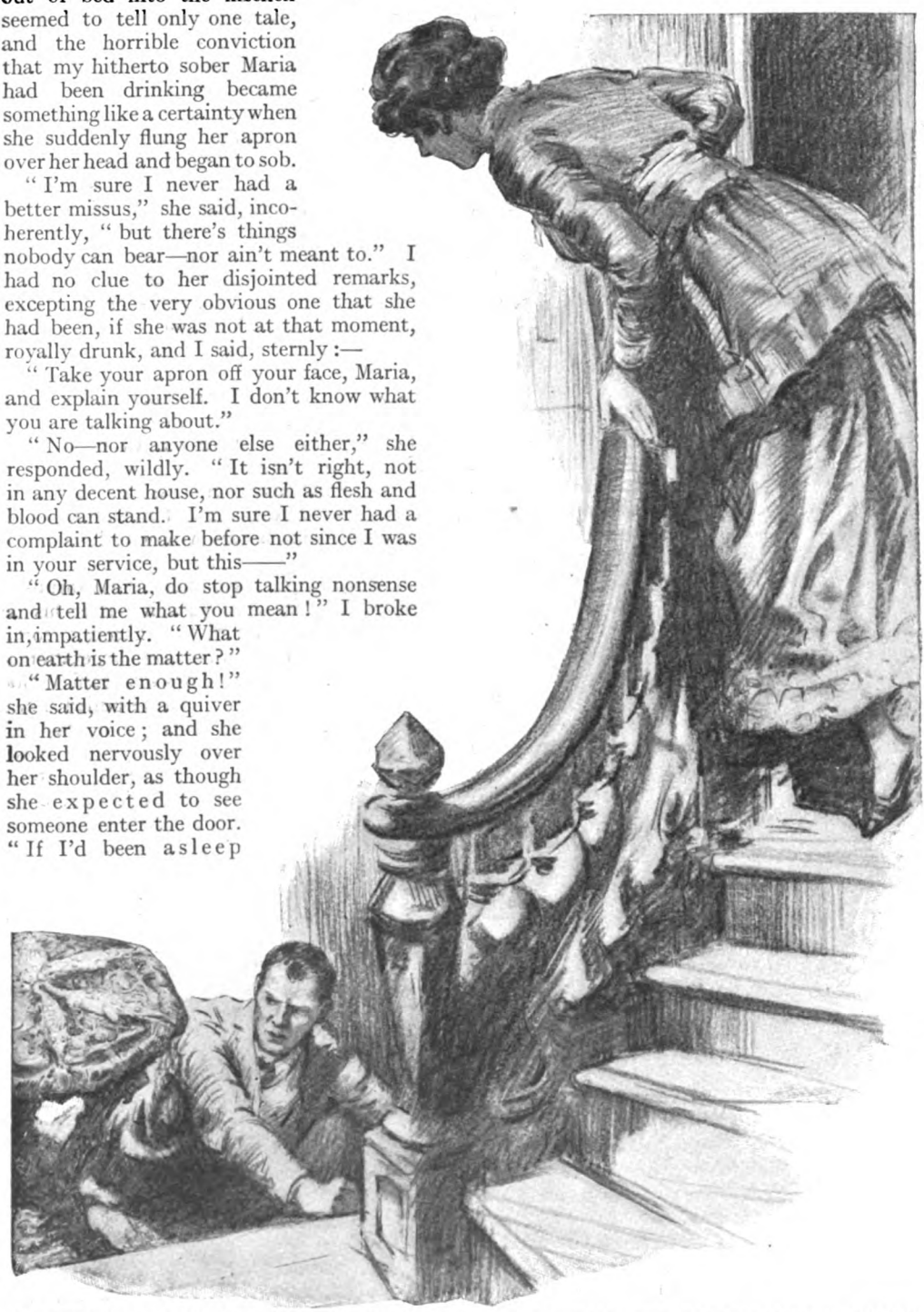
"I'm sure I never had a better missus," she said, incoherently, "but there's things nobody can bear—nor ain't meant to." I had no clue to her disjointed remarks, excepting the very obvious one that she had been, if she was not at that moment, royally drunk, and I said, sternly:—

"Take your apron off your face, Maria, and explain yourself. I don't know what you are talking about."

"No—nor anyone else either," she responded, wildly. "It isn't right, not in any decent house, nor such as flesh and blood can stand. I'm sure I never had a complaint to make before not since I was in your service, but this——"

"Oh, Maria, do stop talking nonsense and tell me what you mean!" I broke in, impatiently. "What on earth is the matter?"

"Matter enough!" she said, with a quiver in her voice; and she looked nervously over her shoulder, as though she expected to see someone enter the door. "If I'd been asleep



"I RUSHED TO THE STAIRS, TO SEE HUGH LYING IN THE HALL, THE TABLE STANDING BESIDE HIM APPARENTLY UNINJURED."

I should say it was a nightmare after the toasted cheese, but I was as wide awake as I am now."

"But what happened?" I exclaimed. "Do tell me what you are talking about."

"I don't know," came the extraordinary reply. "If I knew what it was I could tell you, but I don't know no more than the babe unborn," and she shuddered—a shudder that was certainly one of genuine fear.

"Maria," I said, gravely, "I don't like to think——"

"Oh, I haven't been drinking, ma'am—if that's what you were going to say," she answered, quite civilly, and with that odd glance over her shoulder again; "but I never slept a wink after two, and I daren't stir to call anybody. I thought it might get me."

"*What* might get you?" A little chill crept down my own spine on seeing the look in her eyes.

"I don't know," she repeated. "I don't know what it was. Only—I lay there awake, and I heard the clock in the hall strike two, and then"—she shrank closer to me and shuddered once more—"then my door opened—I always sleep with it ajar, but it opened wide, and there came—there came——"

"What?" I cried, when she paused.

"I don't know what it was—only I could hear it kind of sliding across the floor—sliding or pattering—there! I can't describe it, but I heard it. And I didn't dare light a candle—I just lay and shivered and shook whilst it went across the floor."

"Maria, how absurd!" I said, though something in her manner and in her realistic description gave me once more a creeping sensation in my spine. "Probably the cat got into your room."

"The cat?" Maria flung back her head and laughed hysterically. "No cat slides about like that. And there was a great flop, flop. Oh, I couldn't stop here another night, not if you was to pay me twenty thousand pounds!"

It took me an unreasonably long time to argue Maria into common sense, and then she only agreed to stay temporarily and on condition that she might leave her present room and share one with Jane, the housemaid.

"And I wouldn't even do that if you and the master hadn't been so good to me," was her final remark.

"The woman's dotty," Hugh said, irritably, when I told him the story, "but she's a jolly good cook, so freeze on to her, dotty or not. But for Heaven's sake tell all the maids that if we hear any more rubbish about sliding, pattering animals they'll all get such a rowing from me as they won't forget in a hurry."

The incident gave me a feeling of perturbation—I do not know why—and it was a relief when, that evening, Jack Wilding, an old friend of Hugh's, turned up to dinner. He was a delightful person who had travelled all over the world, and his fund of knowledge, not to mention his stock of good stories, was inexhaustible. At dinner he was in his best vein, and I relegated cook and her terrors into the background of my mind; and in the drawing-room later I prepared to enjoy myself. I sat down to work whilst the two men smoked and chatted.

The windows were wide open. It was a delicious May night, and the air that drifted in brought with it the fragrance of hawthorn and wistaria and fresh-growing things, and I sat enjoying it and giving half an ear to the talk of the two men, when all at once the drifting sweetness from without was tainted by that same strange odour which we had once or twice noticed before. Was I right in thinking it the smell of decaying vegetation, or was it not rather some indescribable smell to which I could give no name? As it drifted across the room our guest suddenly sat bolt upright in his chair, and a curious greyness overspread his naturally bronzed complexion.

"My God!" he said, "what is that? And why does it smell the same—the same——" His sentence trailed off into silence, and in the intense stillness following his strange words I heard a sound which, for some reason I could not pretend to explain, gave me a feeling of cold fear. I can only describe the sound as like a far-away bellowing—not precisely the bellowing of cattle, but a more sinister, more horrible sound, pregnant with evil.

"You hear it too?" Jack Wilding questioned, under his breath, and as he rose from his chair I saw that his face was ashen and beads of sweat stood upon his forehead. "You hear it? And the stench is here too! Good God! if I thought I should ever have to cross that swamp again I should go mad!" His words, his tone, his whole appearance were so unlike our usually sane and cheery friend that both Hugh and I stared at him dumbfounded. And there was no doubt that his emotion, to whatever cause it was due, was entirely, even terribly, genuine.

"What's up, old man?" Hugh said, gently. "There is a most awfully queer smell in here, but it isn't drains, and——"

"*Dráins!*" Jack laughed a harsh laugh

"I CROSSED AN ALLIGATOR SWAMP ONCE WITH A FRIEND, AND THEY DRAGGED HIM OFF THE PATH OF LOGS IN THE DARKNESS."

with a catch in it, then he passed his hand over his forehead and looked from Hugh to me with an oddly-bewildered glance. "I must have had a nightmare—a waking nightmare," he said, looking round him. "I could have sworn that I smelt the alligator swamp in New Guinea, the place where——" He broke off short. "I heard the loathsome brutes bellowing," he began again; "but, of course — of course, it was merely some association of ideas." His voice was still shaken, the whiteness had not left his face, and Hugh put a sympathetic hand upon his shoulder, whilst I remembered that strange, faint bellowing which I too had heard.

"Simply association of ideas, old man." My husband's voice penetrated to my understanding. "As likely as not you had been looking at that beautiful little table bequeathed to us by the former tenants. That put alligators into your head." Jack turned and glanced at the table, and he recoiled when he saw the grinning heads lying amongst the crusted delicacy of leaves and flowers.

"Loathsome beasts!" he said, and again his voice shook. "You will both think me an absolute fool," he went on, recovering his self-control with an effort and sinking back into his chair; "but I crossed an alligator swamp once with a friend." He spoke in abrupt jerks and turned his head with a curious uneasy movement. "It was dark, the place swarmed with those unspeakable devils, their stench was everywhere. It was dark—and poor old Danson"—he paused, as if speech were almost impossible—"they dragged him off the path of logs in the darkness." His voice ended on a sharp high note, and neither Hugh nor I could speak for a minute or two. Somehow his words brought before me the hideous swamp, the darkness, the loathly monsters waiting for their prey, and the remembrance of just such an incident in a book I had once read flashed into my mind.

"I couldn't stand that table in any house I lived in," Jack resumed presently, in more ordinary tones, and with a forced laugh. "I never want to see an alligator again, alive or dead, or even carved." He pushed back his chair abruptly and rose. "I think I'll go up to bed now, if you don't mind," he said; "I'm not very good company." And having said "Good night" he was moving across the room, when all at once he stumbled, flung out his hands to save himself, and, failing to do so, fell heavily to the ground. Something slid from between his feet—I saw a dark shape, a flash of white, and then it had vanished; and I stood staring vacantly at the place where it had been, whilst Hugh helped our guest to his feet.

"Something tripped me up," he said, in dazed accents.

"I suppose it's that confounded cat of ours," Hugh answered, and his voice sounded so cheery and normal through the cloud of uncanny, shuddering sensations that were creeping over me. "Trust a cat to be just where you wish it wasn't! I'm awfully sorry, old man. It gave you a nasty jar."

"A nasty jar," Jack repeated, and his eyes were as dazed as his voice.

"Come on upstairs," Hugh said, gently. "I'll help you into bed. You've had a bit of a shaking."

"Yes—a bit of a shaking." The words were echoed, and the two men left the room together, whilst I, with one fearful glance behind me towards where I had seen that dark shape glide and vanish, left the room too with more haste than dignity, shutting the door firmly behind me and scurrying upstairs to my own bedroom.

When Jane brought my tea next morning the first thing she did was to drop the tray with a crash just inside my door, and then burst into a flood of tears. Hugh had gone out early to see Jack off at the station. I was alone.

"I can't stop here—I can't stop here!" Jane moaned. "Cook and me—oh, my gracious goodness, I couldn't stop another minute!"

"Cook has been frightening you," I said, trying to speak sternly, but not wholly succeeding, because of the memory of that something that had slid away from between Jack's feet last night. "I should have thought you were too sensible to make a fuss about a trifle."

"A trifle—oh, my lawks!" And Jane, the irreproachable and excellent servant, dropped into a chair and sobbed afresh.

"What has frightened you?" I said, trying to speak calmly, even though my morning tea was trickling over the carpet, and broken china and bread and butter were mingled in inextricable confusion. "What is it?"

"We all slept together last night." Jane lifted a scared face. "After what cook heard, me and her and Dale all slept together." I nearly groaned aloud. If Dale, my middle-aged parlourmaid, who had been with me for years, was also infected with panic-fear, what should I do? "We all slept together," Jane continued, "and we locked the door"—here she gave a breathless gulp—"so as nothing couldn't get in. But it got in!" Her voice suddenly rose to a little scream. "I couldn't stop here another night!"

"What got in, Jane?" I said, quietly, though my heart beat fast.

"It smelt something awful," Jane went on, heedless of my question, and I expected every moment that she would break into a paroxysm of hysterics. "It got in!" she ended, in a terrified whisper.

"What got in?" I asked. "I suppose the cat was shut into the room before you went to bed, and gave you a fright."

"It wasn't no cat," she answered, under her breath; and try as I would to argue myself into common sense, the hair rose on my head. "It was bigger than twenty cats, it slipped over the floor—over the floor—and oh!" And Jane finished with just the hysterical scream I had expected.

"Did you see this ridiculous thing?" I asked, sternly, when she was quieter; but, sternly as I spoke, my flesh crept.

"We dursn't light a candle," she moaned,

"but the curtains was half drawn, and we saw its shape, and there was a white streak in it, and it slid over the floor—over——"

"That will do, Jane," I said. "Your master and I will talk the thing over. Meanwhile——"

"There's not one of us will sleep in the house again," Jane said, shakily. And to this pleasing resolution our three servants adhered, in spite of anything that Hugh and I could say.

"Give them a night or two away to recover their nerves," Hugh said to me afterwards, with a man's cheerful disregard of the difficulties of running a house without servants. "Get in a char. We shall be all right."

I acted on his advice, sent the servants off for two days' holiday, and sought the nearest charwoman. But at four o'clock the good woman came into my sanctum and refused to stay a moment longer. Her face was the colour of ashes, her speech was rambling.

"Which I can't stand it no longer," she said, "never bein' accustomed to a place where such animals is kep'."

"But no animals are kept except a cat," I answered, my heart sinking into my boots.

"Cats is cats, and dogs is dogs, and troubles though they both may be, and I'm not denyin' they are, still they're what you might call human," Mrs. Jenkins said grandly, but I noticed that for all her grandiloquence she was shaking from head to foot. "The animals what come slithering in and out o' the scullery and kitchen—they ain't human. Runnin' on their underneaths, with paws as don't seem a bit o' use to 'em. Them as likes such pets must keep such pets, but I couldn't stop, not if it was ever so." She had not been drinking. She was as sober as I was myself. I could only pay her her money and let her depart, and I telephoned to Hugh that I would meet him in town and dine there. He listened to my story, laughed at me, said that obviously the maids had put notions into Mrs. Jenkins's head, and that I mustn't be silly. But when, at ten o'clock, he opened our own front door, and the stench which had startled Jack the day before rushed out at us, I shrank back white and trembling.

"Oh, Hugh," I said, "oh, Hugh, it frightens me!"

"Nonsense, my dear, stuff and nonsense!" Hugh began, drawing me in and shutting the door with a sharp clang. "You mustn't let——" And then his sentence ended in a sharp exclamation, and he clutched my arm with a grip that nearly upset my balance.

"Something slid between my feet," he said, using the very words Jack had used; "I was almost down. That cat shall——" He said no more. A frozen horror must have paralyzed his speech, as it prevented me from uttering a syllable, and we stood there clutching each other and looking at the stairs, down which in the dusk we could see a huge shape gliding at lightning speed. Another was coming more slowly out of the drawing-room door, and from amongst the dark shadows of the hall came sounds of sliding and pattering—sounds which made my very blood run cold.

"Hugh!" I found my voice at last, and shrieked my husband's name. "Come away, Hugh, come away!" And opening the door behind me I fled out into the night, dragging my husband with me. Nothing would induce him to go to any of our neighbours. He said we should look a pretty pair of fools if we told such a cock-and-bull story as ours to any rational beings. And we made ourselves as comfortable as we could for the night in the cottage at the end of the garden, a cottage we had just furnished for the lady gardener who was coming to us.

When in the bright sunshine of the next day we re-entered our house, we were beginning to tell each other that we must have been suffering the night before from optical delusions, when I saw in the corner of the hall a flat head in which two malicious eyes gleamed, whilst a devilish grin exposed two rows of hideous teeth. Hugh saw it too, and turned white, but before he could reach the corner it had gone. Then he strode on into the drawing-room, and still without uttering a word he picked up the little table with its delicate carving and the gruesome alligators' heads.

"What are you going to do?" I said, fearfully.

"Burn this infernal thing," was his grim reply.

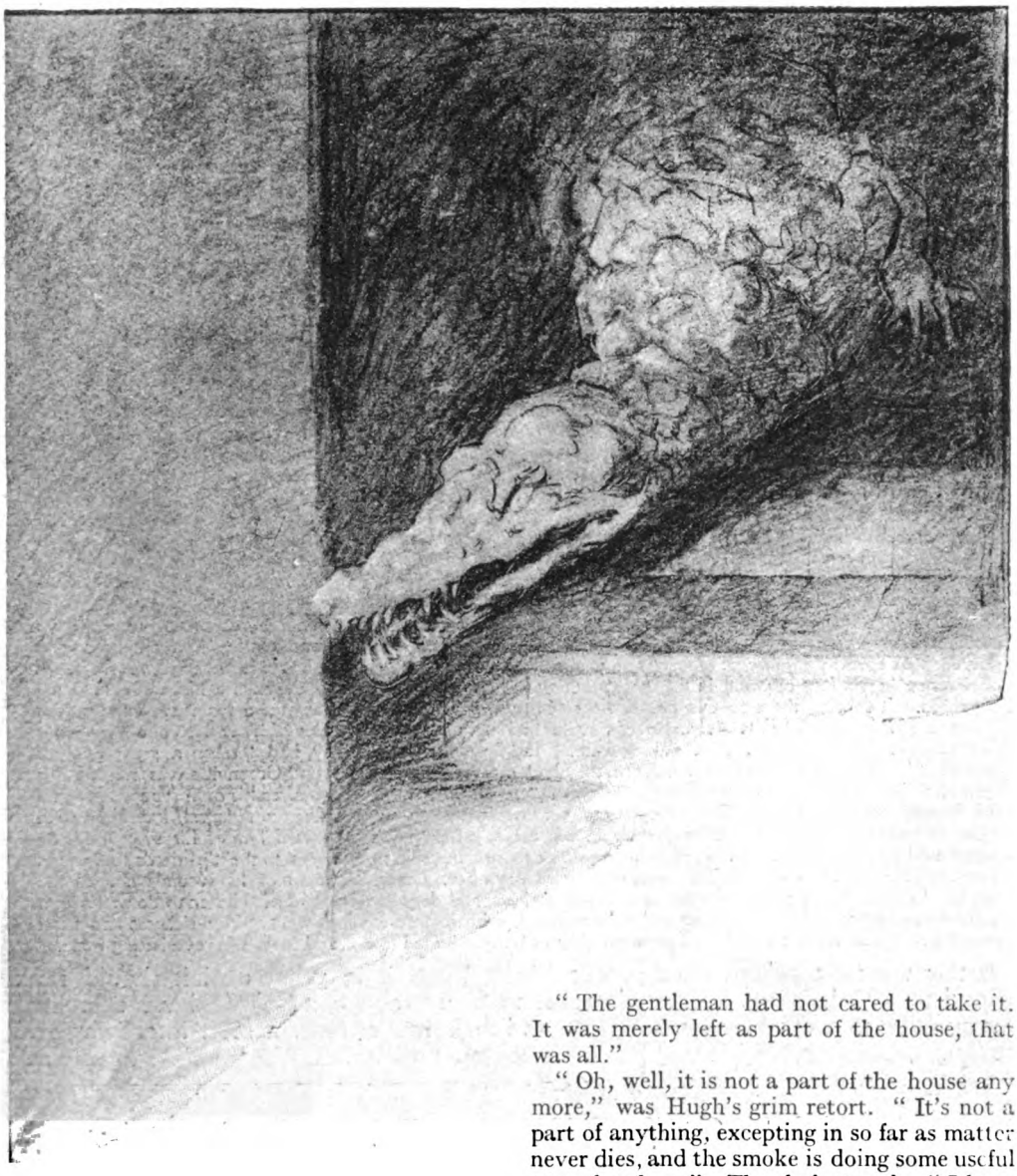
"But how can a table—just a table——" I began, but Hugh only laughed sternly.

"I don't know," he said, "but I am taking no more chances." He carried the table out to the back garden, surrounded it with straw, and set fire to it. And never another word did he speak until the beautiful work of art was nothing but a heap of ashes.

"So perish all devilry," he said, when the last spark had died away; "and now we will go to the house-agent's."

But from the house-agent's clerk we got as much satisfaction as one is in the habit of getting from gentlemen of that profession. He looked at us with mild surprise, and

"WE STOOD THERE CLUTCHING EACH OTHER AND LOOKING AT THE STAIRS, DOWN WHICH WE COULD SEE A HUGE SHAPE GLIDING."



answered our remarks urbanely and courteously.

"Any unpleasant stories about the house during the last tenancy? Oh, well—there had been a few silly servants' tales, but nothing of importance. The gentleman had left because he wished to reside in another county."

"And what about the carved table he left behind him?" Hugh asked, sternly. The clerk shrugged his shoulders.

"The gentleman had not cared to take it. It was merely left as part of the house, that was all."

"Oh, well, it is not a part of the house any more," was Hugh's grim retort. "It's not a part of anything, excepting in so far as matter never dies, and the smoke is doing some useful turn elsewhere." The clerk stared. "I have burnt that infernal table," Hugh went on, forgetting his manners for once; "nobody will ever see it again. You can tell your late client so, with my compliments. To leave it in the house was an abominable and mean thing to do." With that he marched out of the office, and we went back to our house, a house which, from that day to this, has shown no sign of abnormality.

But it was many a long day before I could live down those weird experiences, and even now they are to me quite inexplicable.

Does any explanation of it all occur to you?

What is the Greatest Deed of Valour?

What is the greatest deed of valour in our history? Two great writers—Tennyson and Robert Louis Stevenson—selected the story of Sir Richard Greenville of the *Revenge*. Everybody knows Tennyson's ballad; Stevenson's description is as follows:—

I must tell one more story, which has lately been made familiar to us all, and that in one of the noblest ballads in the English language. I had written my tame prose abstract, I shall beg the reader to believe, when I had no notion that the sacred bard designed an immortality for Greenville. Sir Richard Greenville was Vice-Admiral to Lord Thomas Howard, and lay off the Azores with the English squadron in 1591. He was a noted tyrant to his crew: a dark, bullying fellow apparently; and it is related of him that he would chew and swallow wineglasses, by way of convivial levity, till the blood ran out of his mouth. When the Spanish fleet of fifty sail came within sight of the English, his ship, the *Revenge*, was the last to weigh anchor, and was so far circumvented by the Spaniards that there were but two courses open—either to turn her back upon the enemy or sail through one of his squadrons. The first alternative Greenville dismissed as dishonourable to himself, his country, and Her Majesty's ship. Accordingly, he chose the latter, and steered into the Spanish armament. Several vessels he forced to luff and fall under his lee; until, about three o'clock of the afternoon, a great ship of three decks of ordnance took the wind out of his sails, and immediately boarded. Thenceforward, and all night long, the *Revenge* held her own single-handed against the Spaniards. As one ship was beaten off, another took its place. She endured, according to Raleigh's computation, "eight hundred shot of great artillery, besides many assaults and entries." By morning the powder was spent, the pikes all broken, not a stick was standing, "nothing left overhead either for flight or defence"; six feet of water in the hold; almost all the men hurt; and Greenville himself in a dying condition. To bring them to this pass a fleet of fifty sail had been mauling them for fifteen hours, the *Admiral of the Hulks* and the *Ascension* of Seville had both gone down alongside, and two other vessels had taken refuge on shore in a sinking state. In Hawke's words, they had "taken a great deal of drubbing." The captain and crew thought they had done about enough; but Greenville was not of this opinion; he gave orders to the master gunner, whom he knew to be a fellow after his own stamp, to scuttle the *Revenge* where she lay. The others, who were not mortally wounded like the Admiral, interfered with some decision; locked the master gunner in his cabin, after having deprived him of his sword, for he manifested an intention to kill himself if he were not to sink the ship; and sent to the Spaniards to demand terms. These were granted. The second or third day after, Greenville died of his wounds aboard the Spanish flagship, leaving his contempt upon the "traitors and dogs" who had not chosen to do as he did, and engage fifty vessels, well found and fully manned, with six inferior craft ravaged by sickness and short of stores. He at least, he said, had done his duty as he was bound to do, and looked for everlasting fame.

Is this the most gallant deed in our history? If it is, what exploit should rank second to it? If it is not, what deserves to be set above it? We have submitted this question to several eminent writers, and their replies form a most interesting and thrilling symposium, which will be continued next month.

MR. C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNE.

SIR RICHARD GREVILLE was one of the legends of my upbringing. I notice you spell him Greenville, but will not quarrel with that. He has been written Greynvile and Grivile. They were an illiterate lot in the West Country in those days.

He was some sort of a family connection of ours, and when I used to hear about him he did not seem to have flourished so very long ago, as he had been a pot-companion of my grandfather's great-grandfather. As I say, this does not seem so very far back; but, then, my people have all lived well into the eighties.

Dicky Greville lived at Bideford. My great-great-great-grandfather was an Instow man, and the principal characteristics of Sir Richard that have been handed down were—firstly, he had a filthy temper and would out sword for half a look, and, secondly, that he had an inordinate appetite for squab pie, a local delicacy wherein a young cormorant distributed the central flavour. The main industry of his life could be tabulated according to present standards as piracy pure and simple, and the culminating sea-fight off the Azores was not insisted on. I gathered the details of that from subsequent story-books, and my own estimate is that he was thirsting for one big, gorgeous final scrap with the Spaniards—and got it.

Requiescat in mare!

History, if it were all written, would brim with these gallant fights, but most of them have not caught the eye of the penman. In this present war thousands of men and companies have deliberately fought to a finish rather than surrender. Their deeds have been hushed up by an unimaginative Censor. They have been brave men all, and I reverently bow my head to them. They have gone to their death with a smile and a laugh, but—they have all had the excitement of hitting back.

The officers and men on the *Birkenhead* invited death with no less certainty, but there was no thrill for them in shooting back at the sharks, or the sea; and theirs, I think, was the greatest piece of cold-blooded three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage that has yet been put on record.

Just glance for a minute over the tale.

On April 25th, 1852, H.M. steam transport *Birkenhead*, fourteen hundred tons, Commander Salmond, put out from Simon's Bay, Cape Town, for Port Elizabeth and East London, We were in the middle of a Kaffir war, and Sir Harry Smith was badly in need of reinforcements. Commander Salmond, who was carrying some of these, had got strenuous orders to hurry. He was a fat, stuffy, disappointed man. Promotion had passed him over. But he was a capable seaman.

The *Birkenhead* broke out her anchors at 6 p.m., and paddled out from Simon's Bay into fine weather at some eight and a half knots. Fat old Salmond and his second in command were worn out by a hard day's work, and left the deck to the mates. There was a calm sea and, as it seemed, straightforward navigation. A course was set S.S.E. ½ E., which would give Cape Hanglip a berth of about four miles, and the junior officers stood the watches. A leadsman on the paddle-box took ordinary routine soundings.

At one-fifty on the morning of the 26th soundings were droned out as usual, and Davis, the watch officer, heard contentedly enough thirteen fathoms. Then suddenly the ship crashed on something unseen, and her bows heaved up out of the sea and stuck there stationary. Commander Salmond, with those Governmental orders for "hurry" buzzing in his brain, had not given himself enough sea-room and had hugged Danger Point too closely. The lead, as I say, was going; but the *Birkenhead* had stuck on that most deadly of all sea dangers, a rock rising steeply out of deep water unannounced by breaking surf.

The din of striking was the crack of doom for many of the sleepers below. The sea poured in through the rock-torn hole and drowned most of the men on the lower troop deck in their hammocks. But the rest buzzed out on deck, dazed and scared.

There were women amongst them, children, sailors, and private soldiers of no especial training or regimental tradition. The soldiers in particular were all young, half-trained men, with no war experience. They were raw drafts from ten regiments, going out to fill up gaps at the front. They had little local home adhesion. They were English, Scottish, Irish; men of the North, South, and Midlands. They had no long acquaintance with their officers or their N.C.O.'s. Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Seton, the senior military officer, a tall, thin Highlander, was a stranger to practically all of them. In that black night, and in that desert sea, with the ship beneath them clanging herself noisily to pieces on stone, everything was strange to them, and grimly terrifying. Panic, one would think, could be born from these circumstances without asking for it. Here were easy ingredients.

"THERE WAS NO PANIC. THE MEN FELL IN BRISKLY, AND THE OFFICERS DRESSED THE LINES."

But there was no panic. The fat old naval officer in command yapped orders; the tall, thin military officer in command repeated them;

the N.C.O.'s and men obeyed as mechanically as though they had been drilling on their barrack-squares at home. The men fell in briskly, and the officers dressed the lines.

Sixty were told off in reliefs to the pumps on the lower after-deck, and sixty men set to haul on the tackles of the two paddle-box boats. The rest of them stood stiffly in the ranks. There was no confusion, no talking. The women and children on the poop, awed by the example of the men, hushed their whimpers, and stared at the rockets that crept so swiftly up into the purple dome of the night.

To the eternal shame of the Mid-Victorian Navy, three of the boats failed to get away. The pacifists in those palmy days had whittled down supplies past the danger-point. The davit-tackles of the port paddle-box boat and the starboard gig were rotten, and parted when they were hauled upon, and drowned their crews—who were unfortunately men, and not pacifists. A davit-pin on the starboard paddle-box was rusted in, and the boat could not be swung outboard. The pinnace, the largest boat of the lot, which was carried on the booms amidships, was smashed by falling spars. Three boats only got away, the two cutters and a gig.

Into these the women and children were shepherded in brisk rotation. It was a pretty ghastly scene. Each woman had her man amongst those standing stolidly in the wooden ranks, and would not go without him. They screamed and they fought, many of them, either to stay with their husbands or to take them to the boats; and if they would not go down the ladder without help, they were carried. "Women and children first" ran the order, and these soldiers and sailormen on the *Birkenhead* carried out orders to the letter.

Then, "Lie off the boats" came the next command from the stout old man on the bridge, when the boats had got their freight, and the men in the ranks stolidly watched them row away, and stared after them whilst the *Birkenhead* sank an inch a minute beneath their feet.

Commander Salmond waved to the boats when they were well clear of the ship, and they lay on their oars. Then, "Every man save himself," said he.

But the raw young Tommies stood stiffly in their ranks because their own officers had not repeated this order, and the sailormen stayed where they were because the Tommies stayed. Colonel Seton argued with himself that the boats were full with their crews and the fifty-six women and children they already had on board, and if the odd four hundred men who were left were to make a swimming scramble for them, there was a strong chance that they would be swamped. His simple creed was "Women and children first," and for the rest, *ruat cælum*. But being a Briton and a lover of a horse, he told men off to cast loose the officers' chargers on the lower deck and get them overboard, so that they might have a sporting chance of getting ashore. One Tommy, about to die, whispered out of the corner of his mouth to his neighbour, "He's a dam' fine feller, the Colonel!" But he did not let his feelings on the matter appear on his face. There was no emotion shown, no despair, no indication whatever that they were doing rather a fine thing. We are not a theatrical race, and the men on the *Birkenhead* did their bit very well out there on that bleak desert sea, knowing that the sharks were already muzzling the plates, without any brass band accompaniment.

The fore part of the ship, with an elaborate figure-head of Vulcan carrying an armful of newly-forged thunderbolts, broke off first, and sank into a swirl of waters out of sight. The foremast came down about this time, with all its heavy spars and rigging, and did damage. Then the funnel stays parted, and the funnel crashed down on the working party round the starboard paddle-box boat. The poop was up in the air by now, and thinking it might bring the wreck to an even keel and make her float longer Colonel Seton ordered his men aft. Section commanders translated the instructions, and the men moved to the new position with all the angular movements of the parade-ground, and once more stood rigidly at attention.

There was enough dim light by now to make out the loom of the shore and the deadly kelp-bed that fringed it. That kelp was a peculiar bottle-weed which is almost impossible to swim through. It is full of small animal life, and this lures in fish. The fish attract the sharks, so where there is kelp along these beaches there are always sharks. The sailormen, who knew the coast, had told the Tommies, so everybody on board knew about them. But they did not shiver, or sob, or tremble. They stood stolidly in their ranks.

The officers are said to have shaken hands before the last fragment of the ship dived under the surface, but whether they did or not I cannot say. The evidence is conflicting. But somehow I can't quite see them doing it. We are an unsentimental race.

Then came the ghastly scene of the final plunge, and then for the first time that soldierly line was broken. The British Tommy was not a swimmer in 1853, and—well, you can picture the horror of that choking struggle. Spars, deck-planks, the swamped boats, trusses of hay swirled round in the vortex of the sinking ship, and desperate young fingers clinched on these, and so some were kept afloat. The sharks—I leave you to imagine the sharks.

Stout old Commander Salmond went down with the ship. So did the tall, thin Highland colonel. Of fourteen military officers on board only five struggled to shore through that horrible barrier-reef of kelp, and its still more horrible guard of sea-tigers. The death-roll of the officers of the ship was a heavy one; the death-roll of sailormen and Tommies heavier still. The naval loss was eighty-seven, the military loss three hundred and fifty-eight. The loss of women and children was *nil*. But then, of course, the men of the *Birkenhead* followed out that simple rule of British chivalry, "Women and children first!"

All the world rang with the story.

The King of Prussia saw in the *Birkenhead* a high example which his own disciplined soldiers might with advantage take to heart. He ordered "the record of duty nobly done in the very jaws of Death by these brave Britons to be read at the head of all his regiments."

The lesson may have impressed them, but it took no deep root. Read of the bestial scramble which took place on board the sinking German s.s. *Elbe*. "Huns first" it was there, and to hell with women and children!

"Women and children first" is a bit of a British speciality, but I do not think the rule was ever carried out with greater bravery and sacrifice than when those young recruits of the *Birkenhead* stood to attention and drowned, with boats lying on their oars only a hundred and fifty yards away across the sea.

MR. TIGHE HOPKINS.

GREENVILLE'S action is certainly in some degree unparalleled. But not in the hot blood of battle by land or sea, but in a hundred common walks we shall meet with men, quite untrained to danger, who on a sudden call of duty surmount all natural fears and rise to the supremest heights of character.

"MCLELLAND TOOK THE STEEPLEJACK BY THE LEGS, MCWHIRTER GRIPPED HIM AT THE SHOULDERS, AND THEY SET OUT."

I invite the reader's attention to the story that follows:—

On July 8th, 1909, at the works of the Coltness Iron Company, Ltd., Newmains, Lanarkshire, three steeplejacks (to be precise, two steeplejacks and their assistant) of the Glasgow firm of James Robb and Sons were engaged on a chimney stack. To this stack, or stalk, of an altitude of nearly two hundred feet, they were fixing new lightning-conductors. To any groundsman the daily task of the steeplejack seems a perpetual challenge to death. Around the mouth of this dizzy stack, or three feet from the top, there ran a tiny wooden staging, with no protecting rail. On two sides of the chimney this platform had a width of twenty inches; on the other two a width of nine. I seek in fancy to peer down over the edge of this, and a cold sweat breaks on the palms of my hands.

The assistant had gone below for something, and the two steeplejacks were alone on the platform: one on the west side, the other on the east. "The steam boilers at Coltness are fired with waste gases, so that instead of suffocating smoke belching from the chimneys gaseous fumes, ten times worse from the steeplejack's point of view, came up the stack."

Presently one of the men grew faint. The effect of these gases is rapid; for a moment or two the steeplejack reeled, gasping, against the chimney; then sank face downwards on the scaffolding, and lay there in a swoon.

After an interval of minutes his companion also began to sicken. The wind being westerly, this man's situation, on the west side of the stack, was slightly easier; he could not, therefore, but be concerned for the fate of the other. Doubtless they had known peril together before that day. Creeping round the chimney, he beheld his comrade prone on the twenty-inch platform. Had the swooning steeplejack, regaining semi-consciousness, moved but a few inches outwards, he must instantly have gone over the edge.

The man still in his senses was aware that they were fast leaving him, but while reason remained he must choose a course. He had a cord about his waist, and unfastening this he set on to lash his mate to the scaffolding. His fingers go swiftly but lightly, for he risks at each second the recovery of the man in his hands, and a possible movement of death on his part. This angelic business deftly done, the steeplejack, badly gassed by now, has just strength enough to crawl to the rope ladder and start to swing himself down two hundred feet. The ladder rocks in the wind; and twice the

steeplejack, his brain swimming, nearly topples from it, and has to twist himself about and rest some moments with back and limbs pressed against the chimney. From the crowd beneath issues the assistant, who runs up the ladder, catches and shoulders the steeplejack, and returns with him to earth. The brave steeplejack is barely able to tell what is going on above, and then resigns himself to Dr. Little.

But it was not for his own safety that this man had left his post. He had done so to procure a rescue for his mate. A telephone message was conveyed to the firm in Glasgow, who at once dispatched a car to pick up two of their steeplejacks working some miles away at Cambuslang.

But to the crowd on the scene at Newmains this delay was dreadful. Dreadful above this, however, was the task to be essayed on the thread-like stage two hundred feet in the air. The steeplejack in the doctor's charge had done what one man could do, and was at the end of his forces. The helpless workman aloft was just discernible, a faint outline on the faintest ribbon of planking. But if you looked from the man to the thin rope ladder swaying in the wind! and there was no other way of reaching him!

Here, none the less, was a thing to be done instantly, with no thought whether of danger or of fate—and the man appeared. He was David McWhirter, an engineer on the staff of the company. He seems to have come quite suddenly on the scene, and as suddenly to have resolved to take this summons from the empty air. To the man of absolute directness, as one may say, these resolutions must be inspirational, and exclusive of every consideration of self; for McWhirter, though a skilled ambulance hand, was unused to any sort of climbing.

"Send Willie McLelland to me," said he, putting off his jacket; and then set foot on the ladder.

"A perpendicular ladder is more difficult to climb than one resting against a wall, for in the former case the whole weight of the body falls straight, presses upon a man's legs till they ache, drags at his arms till they feel the strain pulling them from their sockets."

McWhirter went up heedfully, keeping a skyward gaze, and treading without a fault. Arrived at the chimney's mouth, he clambered warily on the staging, steadied himself against the stack, and, stooping away from the fumes, went round to the steeplejack. This poor fellow lay there as still as ever, unknowing of the heroism his plight had evoked during these incalculable minutes.

McWhirter alone was, of course, as powerless as the first steeplejack had been; but succour was mounting to him. McLelland, his assistant in the engineer's department, had promptly obeyed the call, and was even now making the great ascent. In a few moments the two boldest hearts in Scotland stood together on the twenty-inch plank. McWhirter, cool and direct, had already contrived his plan. All he said was: "Willie, it's up to us to get this chap down."

And now the pair were bending over the steeplejack. They both knew (1) that if they bungled the job of untying and raising him he would probably come to his senses, and (2) that if they lost time over it their own case would be as desperate as his. They freed him from the cord, and had now indeed to brace themselves to a task of terror. In a wind deathly with gas, and here driving full on them, at a pitch above the earth that made it almost fatal to unused eyes to look either up or down, they had to carry a big-framed man clean round the chimney, over twenty inches of planking, over nine inches of planking, and secure him again for lowering. Between the point at which they stood on the east side and the point to be attained on the west side there was a gap in the staging through which projected to a height of nearly three feet a perpendicular ladder-head. In the proud record, so little vaunted, of effort to save life, we shall find, I think, no journey to compare with this.

McLelland took the steeplejack by the legs, McWhirter gripped him at the shoulders, and they set out: McWhirter walking backwards. At half-way they came to the obstacle of the ladder-head. McWhirter, who had thought out every step of their progress, called a halt, and they laid the steeplejack on the platform. McWhirter then edged his way around the ladder-head, and bent over it until he could seize the steeplejack again by the shoulders. Straining every muscle, he raised the man a degree above the ladder-head, and betwixt them they lifted him across it.

They had now got to the nine-inch staging. Their journey, with the dead weight of the man in their arms, must have taken some minutes. The reek of the gas had never left their nostrils, and human energy was giving out; but, within a finger or two of death, rest was no longer possible. In this circle of a few feet, on a territory of inches, they must have seemed to be moving eternally; as a victim stretched for a space of seconds on the rack felt as if he had lived all his real life in torment, and could no more conceive of ease. But they came to the goal where the tackle and the cradle hung. And now for the second time they had to extend their inanimate burden on the platform, while they hauled up the cradle; next, to bestow him in it like a sleeping child, studious not to wake him; and this threefold office was to be achieved on a foothold in which an acrobat would barely turn. Over the void of two hundred feet, with strength ebbing as the minutes ebbed, they did their final piece, swiftly, unerringly—and the steeplejack was launched in the air.

Signalling to those below, his rescuers waited till they had seen him lowered to the ground. Then, with the remnant of nerve in them, they went blindly round to the rope ladder on the other side.

These unknown heroes are working at Newmains to-day.

MR. H. B. MARRIOTT-WATSON.

I BEGIN by frankly confessing my inability to answer this question. But I can respond to it. In looking back over our island story, recorded now over many centuries, certain deeds of valour, certain episodes of undying fame, pick themselves out and shine lustrously. This is because they are naturally fine, but also because they have the advantage of advertisement. Many deeds have doubtless taken place of equal glory, but they have been unregistered, they have had no historian. There are incidents distinguished in our history which it is impossible to read without emotion. You will find them scattered along the pages of our annals, where they glow and incite us by their example. Whether it be the story of the *Revenge*, or of Balaclava, of the Heights of Abraham, of Corunna, of Waterloo, of the Indian Mutiny, of Crécy, of Trafalgar—you have a vast field and can make your choice without risking a mistake. But which will be the bravest deed?

It seems to me that when the curtain has been rolled up which now obscures our view of this present great war, and when we are allowed to know and to talk about it, it will be found to have been marked by deeds as great, as valorous, as immortal as any inherited from the past. At present we have received details of many isolated acts of gallantry, the work of individuals, but we have few particulars of concerted action. Even the terrible retreat from Mons is still veiled in some mystery. Yet one has glimpses here and there of things that have happened, things that indicate great and tragic issues, things which may be equalled by scores of other happenings so far unrevealed to us. I can think of one or two with which I have become acquainted, and I am going to mention one, not because it is the most valiant deed I know, but because I know it, and it is worth recording in a symposium such as this, and because it has great and tragic issues.

On June 30th, 1916, the Thirty-sixth Division lay in the trenches which lined Thièpval Wood, in Artois. Thièpval is (or was) a little village on rising ground from the Ancre, a brook rather than a river, which flows sluggishly through marshy ground into the Somme. The Thirty-sixth Division, otherwise known as the Ulster Division, had been established in Thièpval Wood for some time, and it was known to all what work was before them, and what was expected of them. In this first of the Great Pushes of the now matured war each division had its objective settled by headquarters, and by each the operations of the advance had been studiously rehearsed. On the left of the Thirty-sixth was the Twenty-ninth, which had covered itself with glory in Gallipoli, and on the right was the Thirty-second. To each its particular aim and objective was allotted. The wood of Thièpval is just to the east of the Ancre, which, flowing west-south-west from Miraumont, just below Beaucourt, takes a twist due south and so passes on by Hamel, Mesnil, and other villages into Albert. The British front line was on the north-easterly border of the wood, and the advance on July 1st was made in that direction.

The composition of the Thirty-sixth consisted of seven battalions of Royal Irish Rifles and four of Enniskillings. They were the flower of their age, from the northern counties of Ireland—Down, Derry, Antrim, Armagh, and others. They had most of them been known before the war as volunteers in a domestic difficulty which we all hope is now in process of solution; and here on the Somme they were to give their lives, as did the Sixteenth Division at Ginchy, in the cause of civilization, freedom, and their common country. They were mill-hands and factory-hands and farm-hands, all gathered without the constraint of conscription, and they were to die for Ulster, for Ireland, for Great Britain. On

"MEN FELL IN DOZENS, IN SCORES, BUT THE ADVANCE KEPT STEADILY ON."

the night of June 30th young officers were busy in front of the trenches marking the line from which the start was to be made on the morrow.

In the grey chill dawn of a midsummer day the men rose for an hour or two of anxious waiting before the attack. Our artillery had thundered all night, breaking a way for the infantry. But in those days was it a sufficient preparation? We have learnt much since then, and the affairs at Vimy and Messines and on the Menin Road have been much more successfully managed. The hardest time of all, soldiers will tell you, is the hour before zero. On this occasion zero—that is, the hour when the men go over the top—was seven-thirty, seven-thirty of a perfect summer day.

The main objectives of this attack were Grandcourt and Beaucourt, villages on the high ground in front, fortified to the full by the Germans, about a mile and a half from Thièpval Wood, to the north-north-east and north-east. Between, of course, lay the German trenches the other side of No Man's Land, which had to be penetrated before the objectives were attainable. Were the objectives attainable? As I have said before, we have learnt much since then, and it seems that on parts of the Artois line in July, 1916, some units were given tasks which were beyond their strength. Not beyond their courage and determination, but beyond their numbers. These places had been in possession of the Germans for two years and were highly fortified, as subsequent observation, when they *were* taken, demonstrated. The land rose slowly at times, and at times swiftly from the marshes of the Ancre to the heights of Thièpval, of Grandcourt, which are some three hundred feet above. Patrol officers, scout officers, intelligence officers had their doubts. Had they sufficient numbers to carry their objectives? The doubts increased and spread, and eventually reached a brigadier. His answer was: "We are instructed to attack, and we must do it." They attacked.

Across No Man's Land from the verge of the wood the German trenches were visible, and known, an intricate criss-cross. Beyond were second-line trenches, and third line, and fourth line—and beyond all the objectives. At seven-thirty in the morning the division marched into the front trenches and went over the parapet. What was before them?

The comparatively short distance between them and the German positions was the field of Death. From the moment that the parapet was crossed the advancing battalions became the mark of shot and shell. Our own artillery rended the air with deafening sound, so that it was impossible for our men to hear another. They opened out and spread and went forward steadily, punctuated with the "crump" of the five-niners. Thièpval Wood was being stripped to pieces by the bombardment. With bayonets fixed the troops kept steadily on, saved often from serious injury by their steel helmets. And presently the machine-guns of the enemy came into play upon them. With the continuous crr-ump of the five-niners and the incessant mowing of the machine-guns all in No Man's Land and beyond it became a wild and disorderly welter of confusion. But the advance kept on.

Men fell in dozens, in scores. The machine-guns like scythes mowed them down in swathes. They fell and were engulfed in shell-holes. They still advanced with constantly-lessening numbers, gained the German first lines with bayonet and bomb; passed out, moved on, and penetrated to the second line. Down on the ground to avoid enfilading fire. Forward again. The terrible machine-guns from ambuscade poured a ceaseless swish of bullets. The grasses on the earth were cut as evenly and as regularly as though by mowing machines. Dug-outs were captured and bombed. Still the gallant tide rolled on until in some cases the fourth and fifth German lines were occupied.

But, alas! the German bombardment went on—the terrible machine-fire went on. We have changed all that; for one shell the Huns send us we return them ten. Not so in the old days of the Somme. Grandcourt was reached but by a remnant of the battered division, and this handful of men were unable to hold on to their gain. Night fell, and in the night the retirement was made. Thièpval, Grandcourt, Beaucourt Hamel—all these villages were not to pass into our hand just then—not for some months. The forces were not sufficient to hold the objectives. Back into the reeking, blasted wood crept the remnants of that gallant assault, an assault worthy of record with that of the Light Brigade. Out of ten thousand fighting effectives there were seven thousand casualties. And the fight was so determined that practically no prisoners were taken by the Germans.

On the right the attack of the Thirty-second on Thièpval had failed, and on the left the attack on Beaucourt Hamel. The Ulsters were thus left with both flanks in the air, which accounted for their terrible losses.

There is a little blood-stained pendant to this brief story. On the east bank of the Ancre stood a small village, called St. Pierre Divion, and it was necessary that this should be taken. Two platoons were detailed to storm it, and over the parapet a young subaltern waved them good-bye—"God be with you." A young captain in the twenties led the brave boys, and very soon they were lost to view in the "brown" of the general advance. Not one of these returned. They were wiped out of existence, and the good-bye was indeed "God be with you." I quote the simple lines in remembrance of a young officer who watched them go:—

"Upon the parados a scarlet poppy grows,
Symbol of oblivion—
Scarlet as the blood that flows
By St. Pierre Divion.

"Only the north wind sighs
Over the stricken brave;
Far in the wood there lies
An unknown soldier's grave."

[*Next month we shall publish replies from Mr. Max Pemberton, Mr. Edgar Jepson, and Mr. Morley Roberts.*]

THE PROBLEM CLUB.

By BARRY PAIN.

Illustrated by A. Garrett.

No. I.—THE GIRAFFE PROBLEM.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE general public knows little about the Problem Club. Many are not even aware that it has now been in existence for several years. Nor can it be said that the references to it which have appeared from time to time in the Press have been very enlightening, or even reasonably accurate.

For instance, a paragraph in a recent issue of a society paper (which, it may be admitted, is generally well informed) makes various statements as to the Problem Club. It says that the club has its premises underground in Piccadilly, that a former Premier is a member of it, that all the members are required to swear a most solemn oath to act with scrupulous honour in the monthly competitions, and that high play frequently goes on. The actual truth is that there are no club premises. The famous but old-fashioned restaurant that reserves two rooms on the first floor for the club's monthly meetings is not situated in Piccadilly. No Premier has ever been a member. The story of the solemn oath is even more absurd. After all, the members are gentlemen. They would as soon think of taking a solemn oath not to cheat at cards or at golf. The "scrupulous honour" is taken for granted. Lastly, there is no high play in the accepted sense of the term. The amount that a member can win or lose in the monthly competitions will be stated presently, and any betting on the results is prohibited.

Silly misrepresentations of this kind have caused some annoyance, and it is now thought that a discreet but authorized account of some part of the proceedings of the club would be preferable.

The club consists of twelve members, and the annual subscription is one hundred and thirty-four pounds. Of this sum twenty-four pounds is allotted to the club expenses, including the club dinners which are held on the first Saturday in every month. Each member in turn acts as chairman at one dinner in the year, afterwards adjudicating upon the problem competition for that month; while at the other eleven meetings he is himself a competitor, the remaining one hundred and ten pounds of his subscription being treated as eleven entrance fees of ten pounds each. The problems are not of a mathematical nature, and are invented and propounded by Leonard, the ingenious head-waiter of the restaurant. The winner receives the whole of the entrance fees, amounting to one hundred and ten pounds; if there is more than one

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winner this amount is divided equally between them. Thus for his investment of one hundred and ten pounds it is possible that a member may in one year obtain a return of one thousand two hundred and ten pounds, if he is the sole winner of the eleven competitions for which he is eligible. But the minute-books of the club show that in actual practice this has never happened; indeed, the record, made by Mr. Pusely-Smythe in 1911, is seven wins, and on two occasions out of the seven he had to share the prize with another successful competitor.

It may be admitted that the club has necessarily been of the nature of a secret society. Some of the problems set have been rather curious, and it has occasionally happened that in the course of their practical solution members have been led to do things which might prejudice them in their domestic or social relations, or even subject them to the penalties of the law.

It is permitted to add an account of some of the pre-war meetings of the club, various natural precautions being taken to prevent the discovery of the identity of members.

It was the forty-second meeting of the Problem Club. Dinner was over, and the members had adjourned to the lofty and comfortable room where the business of the evening was transacted. A side-table was suitably equipped with provision for smokers—all the members were smokers—and for such other refreshments as might be required in the course of the evening. One or two waiters still lingered—removing a coffee-cup, handing a liqueur, or placing an ash-tray and matches conveniently on one of the small tables. A hum of conversation went on through the blue haze of the cigar-smoke. Mr. Pusely-Smythe, with his usual lugubrious manner, was just coming to the end of a screamingly funny story. Any reference to the competition to be settled is by an unwritten law forbidden until the chairman has opened the proceedings, but it was noticeable that Major Byles was once more talking of resigning his membership. He was not taken very seriously. He was an original member, and, though he lived in the country for the greater part of the year, had never been known to miss a single meeting of the club. His continuous bad luck in the competitions had irritated him, but nobody believed in his threat of resignation, and it may be doubted if he quite believed in it himself.

The waiters left the room, and Sir Charles Bunford, an elderly gentleman of distinguished appearance, who was chairman for the evening, took his place at his table and arranged his papers. Among them the club cheque-book showed temptingly. In accordance with the club custom by which the chairman at one meeting acted as secretary at the next, Dr. Alden took his seat beside Sir Charles and prepared to make a note of the proceedings for the club minute-book. Conversation ceased. The other members seated themselves informally in a semicircle of easy-chairs. There was indeed a marked absence of formality at the Problem Club. There was no order of precedence. The chairman did not rise when he spoke, nor did members rise when they answered him.

"Now, gentlemen," Sir Charles began, "we have before us to-night the Giraffe Problem. I will read it out to you as worded by our esteemed friend Leonard: 'It is required to induce a woman who is unaware of your intention to say to you, "You ought to have been a giraffe."' Now, of course, I'm not a competitor, but I must say that I'm sorry I'm not. Upon my word, I don't think Leonard has ever given us anything quite so easy."

There were several dissentient voices: "Not a bit of it." "Can't agree with you there, Bunford." "Wish I'd found it so." "Leonard knew what he was doing this time."

"Oh, very well," said Sir Charles, smiling. "I should have thought there were a score of conversational openings to which the inevitable reply would be, 'You ought to have been a giraffe.' I may be wrong, but I still expect that the prize to-night will have to be divided between four or five of you. However, we'll see what luck you've had. I'll begin with you, doctor, and then go on in the direction of the sun and the wine."

Dr. Alden shook his head. He had a strong head, an alert expression, and a bright eye. "No good," he said. "There was too much to do in Harley Street this month for me to be able to give the proper time to it. I made an attempt. It has probably cost me the esteem of an excellent woman; these excellent women never think you're serious except when you're joking. I gave her the chance to tell me I ought to have been a giraffe, but she never took it. Enough said. Try the next man."

"The next is our only member of Parliament, Mr. Harding Pope."

"Not competing this month," said Mr. Pope, rather pompously. "My constituency has made great demands upon me, and I'm unable to defend my entrance fee. Fortu-

nately, the pleasure of the company in which I find myself is worth far more."

"That's all right," said Sir Charles, warningly, "but don't get too slack. We've got a long waiting list. What about you, Major Byles?"

"My usual luck," said the Major. "I worked the whole thing out completely and made all the necessary preparations. I was down at my cottage at the time. I assure you that during the whole of breakfast one morning I talked about practically nothing except giraffes and the way that they can pull down fruit from a tree, thanks to their thundering long necks. My wife, the children's governess, and Mrs. Hebor, who was stopping with us, all heard me, though I can't say that they seemed particularly interested. Afterwards my wife and I were in the garden, and I pointed to a tree full of ripe cherries.

"'I like fruit,' I said, 'but I hate climbing trees.'

"Now, considering the ground-bait that I had been putting down at breakfast, I consider the betting was ten to one that she would reply that I ought to have been a giraffe. Instead of that, she said that Wilkins would get them for me, and then seemed surprised that I was annoyed. A few minutes later I tried the governess with precisely the same remark, and she asked me if I would like to have a ladder fetched. (I often wonder what I pay that woman her salary for.) Then Mrs. Hebor came out—as dependable a woman as I know in a general way; you nearly always know what she is going to say before she says it—and I told her that I liked cherries, but hated climbing to get them.

"'You ought,' she began—and this time I thought I really had got it—'to be able to reach some of those without climbing.'

"After that I gave up. No amount of intelligence can contend against luck like that. Matter of fact, I'm tempted to give up this problem business altogether."

"Oh, don't do that," said Sir Charles, soothingly. "It was hard lines, but we shall see you a prize-winner one of these days.

"A FEW MINUTES LATER I TRIED THE GOVERNESS WITH PRECISELY THE SAME REMARK."

Now, Mr. Cunliffe, what have you to tell us?"

"I failed," said the Rev. Septimus Cunliffe, an elderly cleric who specialized in broad-mindedness. "Plausible strategy, but disappointing results. Nothing of interest to report."

"Did you do any better, Mr. Matthews?"

Mr. Matthews was a man of forty, bald, round-faced, rubicund, and slightly obese. The task of ordering the club dinners and the wines to be drunk therewith was always left in his hands with a confidence which was invariably justified. His knowledge as an epicure was considerable, and it is possible that his intelligence was less considerable, but more than once he had been lucky in a competition. He was the richest man in a club where nobody was very poor, and was good-tempered and popular.

"Well, you know," said Matthews, "I feel as if I ought to have won this. At one time it looked as if I simply had it chucked at me. I was talking to Lady Amelia, who does a lot in the East-end and is always nosing round for subscriptions.

"'Why do you men drink?' she asked, in her blunt way.

"The question of this competition occurred to me, and it looked like a good chance.

"'Well,' I said, 'the pleasure begins in the palate, but I fancy that it continues in the throat. I often wish I had a longer throat.'

"You would have hardly thought she could have missed it, but she did. Said that she was sure I was not so bad as I made myself out to be, and milked me of a fiver for some rotten 'good cause.'"

"Look here," said Major Byles, returning from a fruitless visit to the side-table, "I'll ask the chairman for a minute's interval. They've not put out any seltzer, though they must know that I always take seltzer with mine."

"Certainly, Major; certainly. Would somebody kindly touch the bell?"

The seltzer-water was brought and business was resumed.

"Your turn next, Jimmy," said Sir Charles.

The Hon. James Feldane, a rather weary young man, said, "Well, I claim to be a winner, but there's a shade of doubt about it, and I'll ask for your ruling. All I can say is that if I don't touch the money my luck's even worse than the Major's. Like him, I was systematic about it. My first step was to buy some of the highest collars that could be got for money—two inches or so too high for me and beastly uncomfortable. I put one of them on, and looked like a bad freak—something out of a back number of *Punch*. My next step was to call on my married sister. She told me to go home and dress myself properly, as I knew she would. So I asked in my innocent way what was wrong, and she said I seemed to have mistaken my neck for the Nelson Column.

"'Alluding to my collar?' I said. 'Well, I like plenty. I'd wear a collar three feet high if I could.'

"And then my fool of a brother-in-law stuck his oar in, and said, 'You ought to have been a giraffe'; and I'm absolutely certain Dora would have said it if he hadn't got in first.

"So there it is—the words were all right, but they were used by a man. Still, for some purposes—bankruptcy and things of that kind—a man and his wife count as one, don't they? What's the ruling?"

"My ruling," said Sir Charles, "is that your claim fails. It is required that the words should be used by a woman, and your brother-in-law is not a woman."

"Yes, I was afraid you'd think so," said Jimmy, "but it was worth trying. Anybody want any rotten high collars?"

"Now, Mr. Pusely-Smythe," said the chairman.

Mr. Pusely-Smythe was a man of middle age with dark cavernous eyes and an intellectual forehead. He was pale and thin, and was less solemn than he seemed.

"I claim to have won," he said, in a melancholy voice. "My method was not the most obvious or direct, and might easily have failed, but the luck was with me. I must tell you that I happen to know a Mrs. Magsworth, who of late years has given way a good deal to Nature Study. She haunts the Zoo and the Botanical Gardens. She understands about the habitat of the hyena, and if cockroaches devour their young, and which end of the tree the onion grows—all that kind of thing. She is rather severe with people, who, as she phrases it, 'show an abysmal ignorance of the simplest facts.' She has got a face like a horse, though that is not germane to the question. I arranged with a kindly hostess to let me take in Mrs. Magsworth to dinner one evening—I gather that there was no particular rush for the job.

"I said: 'I'm so glad to meet you again, Mrs. Magsworth. With your knowledge you will be able to settle a point that has been worrying me for days. My little nephew asked me which was the tallest animal. And, do you know, I couldn't be quite sure.'

"'Then, Mr. Smythe,' she said, 'you ought to have been. A giraffe is much the tallest of the mammals.'

"So I claim to have won. She, being a woman ignorant of my intention, was induced to say to me the words required in the order required and without the interpolation of any other word."

"But there's the interpolation of a full stop," said Mr. Harding Pope, and was at

once called to order—only the chairman has the right to comment and to adjudicate.

Sir Charles took a few moments to consider his decision, and then gave his ruling as follows:—

"My ruling is that Mr. Pusely-Smythe's claim is conditionally allowed. It is true that Mrs. Magsworth used other words both before and after the words required, but that is not precluded by the terms of the problem. The only other possible objection is that there was the interpolation of a full stop. Now, there is no full stop in spoken speech: it is represented by a pause. In this case the pause indicated the end of a sentence. In another case the pause might have indicated that the woman could not for a moment think of the word giraffe. In that case I am sure that no objection would have been raised. Yet there, too, a sign could be used to represent it in print or writing. Leonard requires certain words in a certain order, but he does not forbid a pause to be made between them. Unless some member has induced a woman to use the same words with no pause whatever—which I should rule to be a still better solution—Mr. Pusely-Smythe's claim is allowed."

As no other member had met with any success at all, a cheque for one hundred and ten pounds was drawn to the order of Mr. Pusely-Smythe and handed to him with the congratulations of the chairman.

The chairman's next duty was to open the sealed envelope containing the problem set by the ingenious Leonard for the ensuing month. This was entitled "The Kiss Problem," and when its conditions were read out both Major Byles and the Rev. Septimus Cunliffe objected to it, though on totally different grounds, and urged that Leonard should be asked to substitute something else. However, on a vote being taken, it was agreed by a considerable majority that "The Kiss Problem" should be retained, although, as the chairman pointed out, it looked excessively dangerous.

Mr. Pusely-Smythe was reminded that it was his turn to be chairman at the next meeting. And then, the business of the evening being at an end, the card-tables were brought in, and members addressed themselves to bridge at moderate points.

"SHE SAID I SEEMED TO HAVE MISTAKEN MY NECK FOR THE NELSON COLUMN."

NOTE.—*The adjudication of "The Kiss Problem" is dealt with in the next number.*

The Premier's Election Portraits.

We have pleasure in reproducing a unique series of portraits of Mr. Lloyd George at each of his elections for Carnarvon, and our readers will be interested in noting how the young man's face has developed into the features which are so familiar to the whole world at the present day.

Photographs by Wickens, Upper Bangor.

1890 ELECTION—
Majority 18.

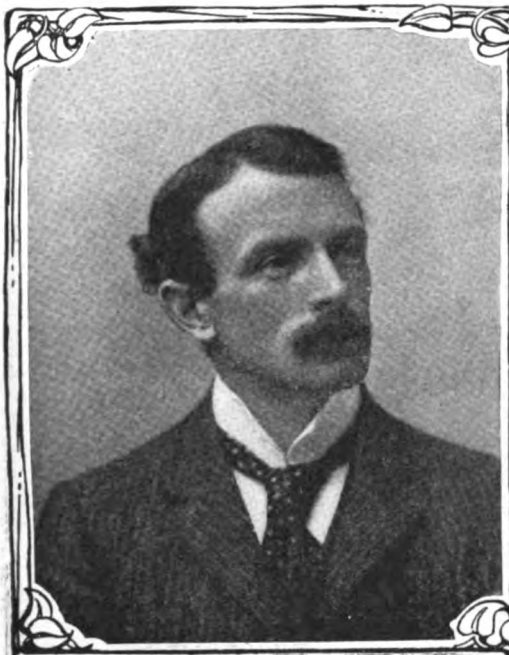
AGE 27.

1892 ELECTION—
Majority 196.

AGE 29.

1895 ELECTION—
Majority 194.

AGE 32.



1900 ELECTION—Majority 296.
AGE 37.

1906 ELECTION—Majority 1,224.
AGE 43.

1910 ELECTIONS—Majorities 1,078 and 1,208.
AGE 47.

A recent portrait of Mr. Lloyd George and one of the best ever taken.

By F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

TWO officers sat at table in the long wooden hut that was the mess of the junior officers of the airship squadron. Both were very young, fair-complexioned, with close-cropped hair, typically North German. Round them were the remains of a copious meal. Used crockery upon the table indicated that other officers had already eaten, but the two young men sat alone.

The furniture of the hut was of the simplest. In addition to the inevitable piquant or humorous designs culled from the illustrated papers, a large, double-page drawing from the *Illustrierte Zeitung* was prominent on the wall. It depicted, with powerful imagination, a London whose architectural peculiarities were emphasized in an inferno of blood-red flame, fire-racked shipping in a tangle under a shattered Tower Bridge, while overhead a fleet of Zeppelins floated with insulting calm high above a lattice-work of searchlights starred with bursting shells. Underneath was the legend, in fat Gothic type: "Gott strafe England! Der Schreck in Himmel" ("The terror in the sky").

The slighter of the two officers gazed thoughtfully at this interesting product of German art.

"Is it really like that, Fritz?" he asked.

His companion laughed shortly at the earnest tone of the question. It was made manifest that he was a man of experience.

"Not quite, Otto," he admitted. He glanced at the watch upon his wrist. "*Noch zehn Minuten*," he said, and the would-be ease of his voice somehow wrecked itself upon a false note of jauntiness. He drew a case of fat cigars from his pocket and proffered it to his companion. "Take one," he insisted. "It will be long before you get another."

Both lads puffed manfully. Fritz Steinhauer and Otto von Bruchheim had been school-chums together. Both at the earliest possible moment—but Steinhauer, by virtue of a slight seniority in age, three months before his comrade—had answered the call of the Fatherland. More fortunate than so many thousands of gallant lads short-sightedly sacrificed in schoolboy battalions, they had profited by their real abilities and much influence to enter the airship service. Both had passed through the great central school at Leipzig—Fritz always in advance—and now, after several months of separation, they were again re-united. By a happy and rare chance Otto had been posted from the school to the same squadron as his friend. He had arrived only yesterday.

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Otto continued to stare at the picture, although evidently he looked through it, down a vista of thought.

He leaned suddenly forward across the table to his friend.

"*Alter Bursch!*" His manner was shame-faced. Clumsily he groped his fingers in a breast-pocket while he spoke. "You know people feel—feel sometimes—in advance——" He extracted a little packet from the pocket. "If—if anything happens I want you to give this to your sister Elsa," he finished, in a swift, nervous run of words.

His friend looked at him in pleased surprise.

"You and Elsa! I had no idea—— But, *dummer Kerl,* if anything happens to you, it happens to me also! We all go"—he indicated with an earthward gesture of the hand—"together." A big puff of cigar-smoke and a backward jerk of the head marked his contempt for the possibility.

Otto chastized his forehead with his fist.

"Of course!" he laughed. "What a fool I am! Fritz"—he leaned forward again, his face all boyish earnestness—"this is my first trip in real earnest—but—but you know I'm not afraid, don't you? It wasn't that—it was——" He stopped awkwardly.

"Afraid?" echoed Fritz. "Of course not! Whoever heard of a German officer who was afraid?" He swaggered in front of a mental mirror after the manner of his race and caste. "But it's a pity you haven't got a real job. It's much better when there is a responsibility to keep your mind occupied."

Otto was "supernumerary officer under instruction." He nodded his head absently.

"The captain is a good man, isn't he?"

"Good? I should think so!" answered Fritz, with pride. "It is something to be his second-in-command! And, Herr Gott, doesn't he hate the English! He knows his way over their cursed country better than you do yours over the Leipzig flying-grounds. He used to fly over England at night even before the war. He has often told me about it. It seems some of the stupid Engländers heard the engines in the air and wrote to the papers about it, and once he and the other officers who used to fly in the old Zeppelin thought that the game was up. But then more mad Englanders wrote to the papers that it was all nonsense, and so everything was all right." He looked at his watch. "Time's up! Get your coat on, *alter Bummler!*"

He shouted for an orderly. The man appeared, assisted both officers into the thick padded coats which went over already cold-proof clothing. On the moment of departure Fritz turned to his friend.

"If you like to give me the packet for Elsa," he said, in a voice he made as ordinary as possible, "I will put it with some things of mine that my servant is looking after."

The light had not quite faded out of the sky of a late autumn evening when they left the hut. They emerged into a vast level field. Directly in front of them, at a considerable distance from each other, three enormous Zeppelin sheds were the dominant feature in the landscape. Close to each, dwarfed to Lilliputians by the huge bulk, was a body of infantry, immobile in their ranks. Every tree and hedge which could possibly interfere with a landing had been cut down, but the long, straight march of elms lining a main road had been left as a wind-screen. Behind it rose the spires of a Belgian town, just discernible in the twilight.

The two lads walked swiftly across the wide landing-ground towards the nearest of the airship-sheds. Of the diffident suggestion of schoolboy intimacy that had escaped them in the privacy of the mess-hut there remained not a trace. Despite their clumsy attire, they hastened with erect, well-drilled carriage, superb in stern self-poise. They were, very consciously, German officers in an idolized service. They belonged to a super-caste of the War-Lords, in whom a hint of human weakness was as unthinkable as pity in a barbaric god. On duty, at least—they had imbibed the theory with their mother's milk—they were of a divine hierarchy, the world of men at their feet. They saluted smartly, with a stiff, precise gesture—both moved as by one spring—the commanding officer of the infantry drawn up near the shed.

The great doors were flung open. Within, masking somewhat and yet reflecting the powerful white electric lights, the monster towered above them, incredibly huge. The long parallel lines of the immense polyhedral flanks receded, softly gleaming aluminium, and drew together far, far back in the illumined depths of the vast shed. Stout steel cables, taut to ring-bolts in the concrete floor, as well as an infinite multitude of smaller ropes, pinioned the floating leviathan to immobility. Beneath the colossal bulk of the rigid gas envelope, the hanging cars linked by the long, narrow, rod-slung gangway, even the enormous propellers seemed dwarfed to insignificance. Under the lofty, cathedral-like roof of the shed the voices of men resounded with a hollow echo. The overall-garbed mechanists by the door sprang

smartly to a salute as the two officers entered.

From the central car a whitewashed rope-ladder hung, nearly touching the floor. Fritz sprang up it with such agility as his padded clothing permitted. His friend followed. At the top of the ladder an *Unteroffizier* stood rigid, saluted.

"All ready?" asked Fritz, with clipped curtness.

"*Ja, Herr Leutnant.*"

With the swift precision of a man who thoroughly knows his job, Lieutenant Steinhauer started on a tour of inspection of the entire ship. The senior *Unteroffizier* and Otto followed him. Everywhere the crew stood ready at their stations. In the central control-car, roofed, upholstered, fitted with panels that could close over the transparent celluloid windows, the steersman stood in waiting behind the wheels and levers that gave him mastery over the lateral or vertical progress of the ship; the telephonist sat before his instrument. Under a row of dials on the wall—clock, aneroid barometer, speed gauges, etc.—a great chart was spread on a strutted table, field-glasses upon it. In another compartment the wireless operator sat at his apparatus. Between the two, below the gangway, the bombs were ranged in two neat parallel rows, suspended between rails. The couple of men detailed for the duty stood by the levers which at the proper moment should release the missiles. The machine-gunners, fore and aft and centre, were at their posts. Steinhauer glanced at the spotless cleanliness of the weapons, assured himself that the correct reserve of ammunition was instantly available. The low-roofed engine-cars at bow and stern were inspected, their machinery tested in a roar that re-echoed thunderously under the roof of the shed while the disconnected propellers remained motionless. Particular attention did the officer devote to a little car slung tight-close under the floor of the gangway between two drums of coiled steel wire. A manhole was opened in the floor, an electric light switched on below. A snug little nest, well-padded, in which a man could lie full-stretched, was revealed. Steinhauer assured himself that field-glasses, telephone, and emergency rations were all at hand. The manhole was closed, the two officers and the N.C.O. continued their tour. A climb up a narrow ladder through the darkness of the great envelope, between the ballonets, to the machine-gun platform at the top, and the inspection was finished. Steinhauer glanced at the time, and, calmly satisfied, took up his station at the head of the dangling rope-ladder. Lieutenant von Bruchheim stood by his side. Their fair, boyish faces rigid, unemotional, they stood, not less than the mighty engine so terribly beautiful in its finely-conceived immensity which dwarfed them, perfected parts of the machine a would-be superhuman Germany had forged for the conquest of the world.

Quick, hard footsteps along the concrete floor resounded in the great shed. In close conversation with a red-striped officer of the General Staff, an officer, whose spare, hawk-like face looked strangely thin above the mass of thick clothing, approached the rope-ladder. They stopped, saluted mutually with a click of the heels, and the hawk-faced officer climbed the ladder. As he mounted, looking upwards, the piercing intensity of his glance—the eyes of a fanatic—gave Otto von Bruchheim a queer thrill. An impulse of passionate patriotism, glorying in risk and sacrifice, pitiless to the foe, communicated itself to him. Not a muscle moved in him, but he suddenly felt himself capable of any desperate heroism. To die, coldly and unemotionally as a German officer should!—he thrilled in every fibre.

The commander reached the platform. The two young officers saluted with precise automatism. Their superior's eyes softened.

"*Guten Abend, meine Herren,*" he said.

The man's personality was magnetic. Here, on the brink of their far-flung enterprise, Otto, who had felt only awe in presence of this stern man, suddenly loved him. To his vague, lofty ideal an intense loyalty linked itself.

The commander turned to Steinhauer.

"Is all ready?"

"*Ja, Herr Kapitän*—all is ready."

The commander nodded.

"Go to your station, then." He turned to Otto. "You will remain with me."

Steinhauer saluted and departed aft. The commander, followed by Otto, moved to the fore-part of the gangway. He blew a shrill blast on his whistle.

The measured tramp of the infantry-soldiers as they marched into the vast shed resounded under the lofty roof. On either side of the great airship they stood motionless in long ranks. Other whistles blew. There were a few curt orders, no shouting. In a moment the leviathan, swaying a little, was checked only by the hundreds of men clinging to the ropes.

Another blast on the whistle and slowly, gently, the great airship began to glide out

of her shed, drawn on the steady march of the infantrymen, tiny beneath them. Otto stood by the commander on the open gangway as they floated out of the hard, white brilliance of the electric-lit shed into the grey of the deepening night. Distant across the wide landing-ground the open doorways of the other sheds gaped, illumined like the mouths of caverns. From them also had their giant tenants been led out to the far adventure. One lay poised on the ground, her immense length, bluff at the nose and tapering at the stern, blocking out the horizon. The other hung already in the air, ghostlike in the faint light, rising vertically and silently.

A whistle shrilled from the after-end of the ship. They were clear of the shed. Still they continued to glide across the ground, the tiny soldiers straining with bent backs at the ropes. The commander glanced at the other ships. Both were now rising. He leaned over the rail, blew his whistle. The signal was repeated from below. The great ship stopped, quivering. "All clear!" was reported from the ground. The commander blew one last loud blast upon his whistle.

"*Nun kann's losgehen!*" he said to Otto, with a grim smile, parodying the famous phrase that had unleashed the fiends of war.

The young officer glanced over the rail. The earth, misty and indistinct, was already far below them, was falling away. Without shock or tremor the great ship rose straight up in the windless air.

"Come!" said the commander to Otto, and led the way to the control-car, bright with electric light.

Kapitän von Breitmüller commanded not only his own craft, but the two other ships composing the squadron. As he entered the control-car he called out an order, prefaced with the code-names of the other ships. "Course W.N.W. at a thousand metres, rising." The telephonist repeated it to the wireless operator in the other cabin. Other orders directing the flight formation, distances, engine revolutions, etc., followed. Otto glanced at the rapidly-mounting needle of the aneroid barometer. It touched 1.000. At the same moment he heard the bell of the telegraph-indicator to the engine-rooms and the answering clangs.

With a deafening, rattling roar, that swelled still louder in response to another clang on the telegraph, the engines started. The great ship woke from her inertia, pulsed with throbbing life. With a dizzy swing she came round to her course. Again the telegraph clanged, and yet louder rattled and roared the great propellers as they clove and forced back the air in their fiercely-swift revolutions. Everything in the great ship quivered with the force of her rush through the air and the feverish life-beat of her engines. To touch wood or metal was to come into contact with an almost painful vibration. The needle of the aneroid barometer still climbed. As she rose into higher regions the ship found herself heading into a slight breeze. She commenced to pitch in long, slow undulations, like a ship in a gentle swell at sea, the cabin floor rising and dropping away almost imperceptibly.

Von Breitmüller drew his junior to the great chart, marked a point upon it with his finger, shouted to be heard above the roar.

"Here," he said, "we meet the other squadron. To-night the *verdammte Engländer* shall know what the hate of Germany means."

The boy glanced up, surprised at the hatred in his superior's voice. The passion he had often factitiously awakened in himself when chorusing the Hymn of Hate was here beside him in a living embodiment, the incarnate spirit of the monster throbbing fiercely through the sky on her errand of destruction.

In obedience to an order from the commander, he went out of the control-car along the gangway. A rush of intensely cold air smote him, penetrated his thick clothing. He glanced over the rail. The earth lay hollow beneath him like a dark bowl from whose rim rose, silver-grey, the night sky. Far below, in the blackness, the lights of a Belgian town glimmered yellow. Aft of the ship, to port and starboard on the same plane as the leader, the single lights of the other two ships glowed like large stars. The radiance from their cars could just be seen.

He passed along the gangway, stepping over the machine-gun crews huddled in thick wraps under the lee of such protection as they could find from the bitter blast. In the rearward engine-car he found Steinhauer in earnest conference with the mechanist *Unteroffizier*. Despite all their efforts, the starboard engine was refusing to run as sweetly as it should. Here, in this long, low-roofed cabin filled with machinery, the atmosphere was pleasantly warm. The noise stunned one, bludgeoning the senses in the confined space.

Steinhauer looked up with a preoccupied frown, shouted at the top of his voice an explanation of the trouble. The N.C.O. gesticulated with a spanner, alleged a diagnosis,

and promised alleviation. Von Bruchheim returned to report.

He found the commander receiving a wireless message from the other squadron. They were in touch. He looked out of the windows, saw searchlight after searchlight shoot out into the night sky and be instantly extinguished. The other squadron was signalling its position. Von Breitmüller shouted an order. From their own ship and from those following, similar beams barred the sky for a moment with an intense whiteness, and then were not. The stars, temporarily obliterated, leaped back into a black heaven. The squadron had effected junction with four more ships, three composing another squadron, the other carrying a very important personage in supreme command of the whole.

From now on von Breitmüller received orders, re-transmitted them to his own squadron. The first was significant. All lights were dowsed. The control-car was illumined only by glow-lamps over the steering-compass, the indicator dials, the chart. The speed of the fleet was increased. Slanting upward, the ship, driven through the air with a force that shook her violently, climbed by her inclined planes to yet higher regions. Already the dial indicated over three thousand metres. Von Breitmüller pointed to a spot on the chart. They were already over the sea.

For rather more than an hour their fiercely pulsing progress continued without event. Dimly through the side-windows, frosted with the exhalations of the men inside the cabin, could be discerned the glint of stars in a dark sky. Of their consorts nothing was to be seen. Otto knew only that the other squadron was ahead, their own squadron spread in a wide echelon behind it. But messages were continually exchanged between the ships. Steinhauer had now entered the cabin, stood with his friend behind the commander, who sprawled upon a cushion, gazing downward through a transparent panel in the floor. They looked also, bending over his shoulders.

Beneath them was an intense blackness that they knew to be the sea. Once or twice a thin strip of white overlaid it, suddenly produced and equally suddenly abolished—the searchlights of patrolling ships. Over on the port bow—it seemed almost directly under them, but was in reality many miles distant—two such strips lay long and motionless across the water, were moved suddenly in a quick jerk, but were not extinguished, and three searchlights shot upwards, waved uneasy arms in the dark sky. "Dover!" said von Breitmüller. They raced on undiscovered, leaving the searchlights well away to port—behind them. Half an hour passed. Von Breitmüller raised himself slightly.

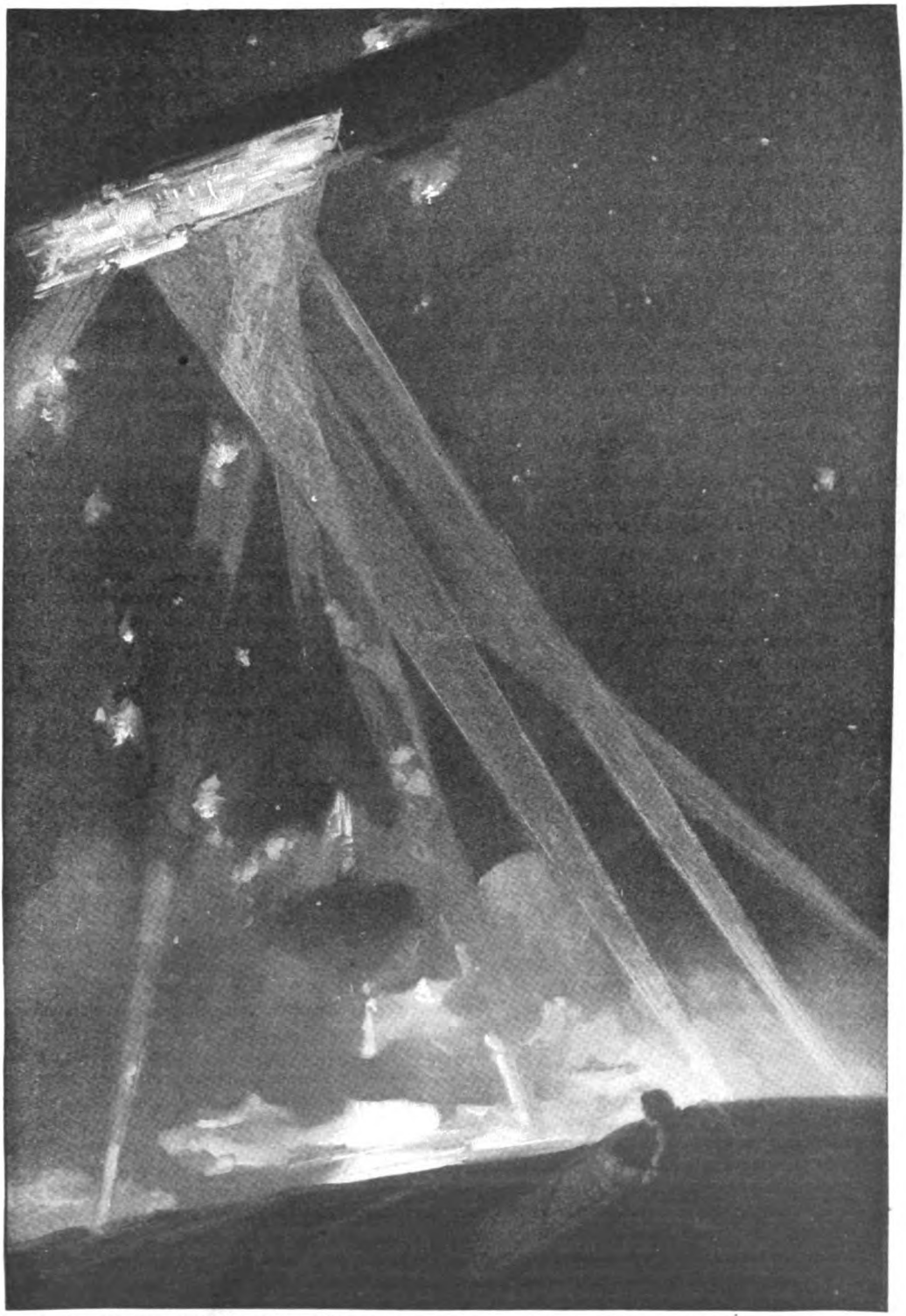
"Observation!" he said to Steinhauer; to Otto: "General supervision of the ship! Keep in touch with me."

The two young men left the comparative warmth of the control-car, stumbled along the gangway in an icy blackness, feeling more distinctly the gentle heave and pitch of the ship, realizing her effort in the numbing vibration of the rod-supports as they clung to them. The vast rattling roar of the propellers would have drowned any attempt at speech. They reached the spot where the observation-car was slung under the drums of steel wire. The cowering, shivering attendant roused himself. The manhole was uncovered. Fritz switched on the light below for an instant; then, after an intense grip of his comrade's hand in the darkness, slipped in, stretched himself. The manhole was replaced. An electric bell rang. The man pulled a lever and instantly the drums began to revolve, slowly at first, then ever more swiftly, paying out endlessly the thin, strong cables. Without the experience of his practice-flights, Otto would have realized the frightful, dizzy swing of the little car suspended far below from the jerky, distressful toss it imparted to the entire ship.

Sharp bells rang simultaneously in various parts of the craft, clear above the roar of her machinery. "Quarters!" Otto hurried along the gangway. He found the machine-gunners standing ready, their thick-gloved hands on the breech. The bomb-droppers were alert, their eyes fixed on the glow-illumined indicator, the levers ready grasped. The searchlight-operator crouched behind the great barrel-lens on the swivel-mounting. Yet the leviathan pulsed onward, dark, emitting no sound other than her familiar roar, tossing jerkily with the pendulum-swing of the car swaying many feet below, rushing towards a fateful moment.

Otto hastened from point to point. His deck inspection finished, he glanced over the rail. Below him all was dark, but in that tenebrous depth he discerned a sinuous strip of even more intense blackness that stretched widening to a point beneath him in sharp curves—the River Thames! Flushed with excitement, he sprang up the narrow ladder which passed through the gas-envelope in a vertical climb to the machine-gun platform above.

He emerged into an intense cold and a



"THE AIRSHIP SWUNG ROUND, HER LONG BODY INCLINED OUT OF THE HORIZONTAL—NOSE UPWARD. THE SEARCHLIGHTS HELD HER.'

spectacle of strangely large stars in a numberless multitude that seemed to crackle as they twinkled in unearthly brilliance on a dark blue background. The heaven was thick-sown with them from zenith to the low horizon. From its depths the beam of light that had left its origin in the days of Charlemagne fell now upon this strange product of the twentieth century rushing softly silvern through the radiant night to annihilate a moment or two in the brief lives of pygmies such as those who made her. But Otto had no thought beyond the immediate. He hastened to the two machine-gun crews, assured himself of their readiness. Then he went to the inward-curving bulwark of bullet-proof steel that enclosed the platform. A rush of bitterly cold wind smote him as though he had run into a wall. He drew back, gasping.

In front of him the broad aluminium carapace of the leviathan stretched featureless, falling away to the sides, and far ahead at the nose, in gentle curves, nowhere dead straight. Beyond it was the star-studded night, through which they drove with sagging, straining rise and fall. Up here, intercepted by the vast bulk of the envelope, the roar of the engines was not so loud, but no other sound came to dispute its pre-eminence. Suddenly, as he gazed, he saw the swift leap of a reddish reflection. A second later, searchlights, bundles of them with divergent shafts, shot up into the sky far ahead and to the right and left. They moved, ferreting with long white fingers among the stars. In their midst twinkling yellow points of flame lived for an instant, were constantly reborn. Simultaneously with a second leaping flash came the rumbling, double detonation of its predecessor, heard through the roar of the hurrying engines. Thrilled, Otto clutched the rim of the bulwark, crouched to escape the blast of wind, and gazed.

The first squadron was in action. Red flash after red flash leaped skyward over a wide area. From those to the right of him, far, far down, he could glimpse the brief yellow germ of the explosive. The roll of their heavy detonations was continuous from spasm to spasm. And ever the questing searchlights moved their long white fingers across the sky, now jerking away independently in a vain hope of the quarry, now clustering together, a waiting menace that suddenly dissolved and swept the heavens anew. Continuously among them, larger and ever larger as the ship rushed onward, flashed the little yellow stars of the shrapnel-bursts. Suddenly a dozen searchlights swung round. Poised on the tip of a converging steeple of white beams, like an eggshell on a cunning water-jet, the long white body of an airship gleamed ghostlike in the sky. The yellow shrapnel-stars multiplied themselves furiously around, below, above her. From the depths beneath her leaped red flash upon flash in savage retaliation—a rolling, heavy thunder of detonations. She swung round, jumped vertically in her effort to escape the deadly glare. Her long body inclined out of the horizontal—nose upward—whether through injury or because she climbed, Otto could not tell. The searchlights held her.

A vivid yellow flash, a simultaneous sharp crack, in the air to his right, level with him, snatched him from the vision. Other sharp cracks, whose flashes he could not see, followed. Glancing over the bulwark, he perceived a faint white milky radiance veiling the black depths, issuing from immediately below. Through it he saw, far away to starboard, the white eye of another searchlight spring into brilliance, swing its long beam towards them. They were discovered! As he sprang to the hatchway he saw the machine-guns and their crews silhouetted black in the blinding whiteness. He swung himself down the manhole to the ladder in desperate haste, the necessity of immediate report to the commander urgent within him.

He slid rather than climbed down the steep, narrow ladder. Here in the darkness between the unseen ballonets, walled in from all vision, a great fear—not for himself, but for the ship—surged up in him. The pulsing vibrations of the ladder, the noise of the engines—here a ringing roar—reassured him that she still lived. A pitch and roll and giddy swerve told him that she manœuvred. The imagined splitting flashes of shrapnel-bursts outside the frail envelope haunted him as he clambered down with frantic haste.

He dropped on to the narrow gangway. All was still dark, though dimly light by comparison with the blackness from which he had emerged. They had dodged the beam. But the horizon was latticed with waving, moving searchlights. From the depths below they shot up like nests of broad white spears. From below also, but ahead of them, the vivid red flashes leaped up without cessation in widespread fans of lurid light. And, grimly significant, far, far below, he saw the fierce glow, the rolling smother, of buildings in a blaze. Despite the overpowering noise of the ship's engines, the detonations came to him in a continuous

dull, shuddering thunder. He thought he heard the sharp cracks of anti-aircraft guns.

As he ran along the gangway to the control-car he saw a gleam of something swooping hawklike through the night sky, rushing down to meet them, bows-on. He shouted a warning to the machine-gunners, forgetful that they could not hear. But they also had seen. There was a sharp crackle of reports, spitting flames—the aeroplane and they whizzed past each other. "Look out!" he shouted to the gunners, useless though it was. The aeroplane had turned, was sweeping down upon them again, racing after them. He waited in an agony of suspense for the bomb. It came not. Their enemy had haply exhausted his supply. The machine drew parallel with them. Otto glimpsed the polished, canoe-like nose of the nacelle, saw the jutting machine-gun switch towards them, spit repeatedly. From aft and centre the two machine-guns of the airship answered in a fierce duel. The aeroplane rushed onwards, outpacing them—nose-dived suddenly.

Otto hurried into the control-car. Von Breitmüller greeted him with a quiet sardonic smile, looking up from the observation-panel in the floor. He held a telephone-receiver to his ear, was speaking into the transmitter.

"Yes—yes," he said, "I understand—no, wait for the intersection of the streets—the glow will help you——" Otto imagined his friend swinging far below, gazing downward, speaking into the telephone. "Right!". von Breitmüller continued. He raised his head, shouted an order to the steersman: "Starboard two points!" Then again into the telephone. "Don't wait too long!

"FOR ONE SECOND THE COMMANDER BENT OVER THE PANEL, LOOKING LIKE AN EVIL MAGICIAN COWERING OVER A DEVIL'S CAULDRON."

Yes — yes." He stretched out his hand, grasped the handle of the telegraph to the engines, pulled it over with a clang. There was a sudden silence. The engines had stopped. They were floating forward on their impetus. The noise of their consorts' bombs surged up to them in a thunder of reiterated shocks.

Telephone to his ear, von Breitmüller laid his hand upon another telegraph—that to his bomb-droppers—waited. In the dimly-lit control-car was a hush of tense nerves. The stillness of the ship, vibrationless and silent after so long, was impressive. Von Breitmüller spoke again. "Yes — yes." His fingers settled themselves in a grasp upon the handle of the telegraph—paused. He jerked it suddenly over. Otto glanced down through the observation-panel, fascinated. From the black depth below leaped a spout of livid red flame—another and another. The airship jumped and quivered, rocked in the crashes of the explosions. Von Breitmüller knelt impassive upon the floor, spoke into the telephone, looked up to Otto. "Target!" he said, with grim delight. He spoke again to the observer. "No—take your line from the river—can you make out the bridges?—right—it's about eight hundred yards from that point." He spoke as though he carried a map of the hated City in his head. "Yes—that's the direction—right." He clanged the engine-room telegraph once more. Once more the rattling roar awoke, but this time diminished, at half-speed. He shouted an order to the steersman—a blinding white glare shot up through the observation-panel, illuminated the cabin.

For one second the commander bent over the panel, his sardonic features strongly accentuated in the unearthly glare, looking like an evil magician cowering over a devil's cauldron. Then he sprang to his feet, switched the engine-telegraph on to full speed, shouted order upon order to the steersman. The ship leaped and shook in a roar of machinery, swung and lurched with an inclined floor. But still the glare shot up through the observation-panel, dazzling any attempt at downward vision. Another beam smote suddenly upon the side-windows. The features of all in the cabin were grotesquely thrown into relief by the pitiless white blaze.

The commander spoke into the telephone again. "No—no—don't bother—I must lighten her anyway."

He clanged the telegraph to the bomb-droppers repeatedly, savagely. From below the blasts of the recklessly-flung missiles rushed up to them, but the flashes were masked by the steady brilliance of the unwavering searchlights. Otto glanced at the aneroid, saw the needle jump. The ship shot up to greater altitudes. Through the frosted windows he saw the gleam of quick yellow flashes, caught sharp detonations in the general roar. There was a louder one—a shudder of the ship. Von Breitmüller was shouting into the telephone. "Steinhauer! Steinhauer!" he called. He looked up, his face anxious. "Go and see what has happened."

Otto went out. The long under-body of the envelope gleamed white above him, the rod-slung gangway was startlingly illumined. In the air all round the shrapnel lit and cracked incessantly. He heard a fragment whiz past his head. He hurried to the windlasses of the observation-car. *They were gone!* A shell had evidently burst right between them, hurled them from their mountings. He stood motionless for a second, paralyzed with horror at the fate of his comrade. He saw the sister—Elsa—looking into his eyes. Then, mastering himself with a spasm of will, he glanced upward—saw a great black rent in the white envelope.

A moment later three well-placed shells burst with vicious flashes at different points along the deck. The ship tossed, lay over, lost her level keel. The noise of her engines diminished, altered in character. With experienced ear, he realized that one was running free, that another had ceased to work. The ship sagged all awry, swerved, and pitched. He had to clutch the rail to maintain his footing. He wondered whether she were falling.

Another and another shell struck her, yet still the terrible burst of flame he feared—looked for at each moment—was withheld. The hostile guns below had got her range exactly on a parallax of searchlights. The shells burst all round—again and again upon the deck. He felt the gangway quivering loose under his feet. He was sure that already some shells had burst inside the envelope—by a miracle, had not exploded the ballonets. Trembling, he hastened back to the control-car, clambering over broken stanchions, swinging himself in one instance with frenzied, unconscious courage across a sheer gap.

He found his superior shouting a message to the telephonist for repetition to the wireless operator. It reported their disaster to

"TREMBLING, HE HASTENED BACK TO THE CONTROL-CAR, SWINGING HIMSELF IN ONE INSTANCE WITH FRENZIED, UNCONSCIOUS COURAGE ACROSS A SHEER GAP."

the flagship. Otto gave him additional details. Cool and sardonic, von Breitmüller listened, repeated the information in succinct, official language to the telephonist.

The message was interrupted by a priority call from the machine-gun platform on top of the envelope. The *Unteroffizier* in charge reported a concerted aeroplane attack, appealed for manœuvres to assist in beating it off.

Von Breitmüller shook his head with a grim smile. He turned to Otto, who stood clutching the doorpost in an effort to keep himself upright. .

"Go up and take charge. Fight to the last!" His eyes flashed. "We should be proud to die amid the ruins of our foes." Otto glanced at the blanched faces of the steersman and the telephonist. "Don't grudge your life, boy. We are only the vanguard. Our comrades follow us in swarms to rain down fire and hatred for our vengeance. *England! England ich hasse dich!* Our death shall be a fiery curse from heaven!" The man's face was that of a fanatic at the stake. "Go, boy!" he finished. "Good-bye!" He

pressed his hand. Outside, the shrapnel crashed and crashed.

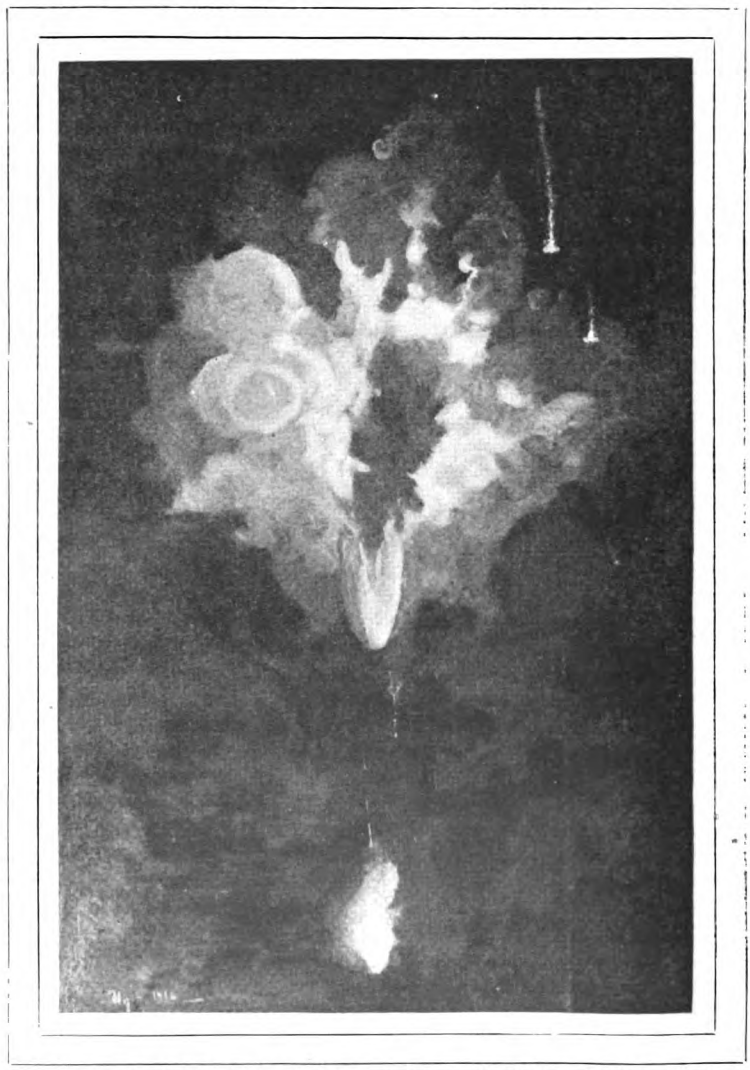
As Otto left the car he heard the commander order the telephonist to release all the bombs. The bombers had been killed, then !

Once more he scrambled hurriedly along the gangway, not giving a glance to the scene around, below him. But, subconsciously, he was aware that the other ships of the squadron were continuing the attack—were meeting a fierce defence. He swung himself up on to the ladder through the envelope, no longer vertically above him, and stopped, checked by a smell of gas. With quick decision he thrust a handkerchief into his mouth and climbed.

He emerged, with bursting lungs, on to the platform—saw one gun only spitting fire ; two men crouched beside it. He ran to assist. As he went, something swooped with an angry whirr, low down, close overhead—shot away. There was a blinding flash, a loud double roar, a sheet of awful flame.

The leviathan tilted, hung almost vertical; great tongues of flame, rolling black smoke, licked upward. With a blind instinct he caught at the bulwark to prevent himself slipping, shielded his face from an intense heat. A man yet clinging to the machine-gun below him let go his hold.

Wrapped in flame, the leviathan drifted, slowly sinking, a fiery terror in the sky.



"WRAPPED IN FLAME, THE LEVIATHAN DRIFTED, SLOWLY SINKING, A FIERY TERROR IN THE SKY."

SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS PROBABLE AND POSSIBLE.

I.

By SIR OLIVER LODGE.

This is the first of a series of papers by the most eminent scientific men of the day in reply to the question, "What is likely to be the next great discovery or invention?"—each expert to reply for his own particular branch of knowledge. The series cannot fail to be of the greatest interest and value to the public.

I WELCOME the opportunity of telling your numerous readers something of what is in my mind, and in the minds of many scientific men, as probable and necessary developments in that apocalyptic period "after the war." I will not enter upon speculation in these strenuous times, but will confine myself chiefly to subjects of real practical import.

Much of it has been said before, but it will have to be said before and behind and every way until it is fully accomplished. Some of the things could be done at once, and only need administration and funds and practical facilities to become realized, while others will have to wait for the disentangling and understanding of new facts by scientific explorers.

Public information and interest would be of assistance in both directions—the agenda list and the waiting list. For the period of waiting could be shortened by national encouragement of young investigators—an encouragement which has never yet been given by this country, nor the need for it understood. It would pay the nation well to give large facilities to energetic and competent youth. Such youth should be set free, untrammelled by officialdom, should be provided with adequate resources, and given its head. Instinct and ambition constitute ample motive power, if they are not sapped by the conventional struggle for existence. Not in war alone will youthful energy and enterprise be found of value. They will make mistakes, sometimes costly mistakes, but they will make other things as well, and these will more than counterbalance the other. It would be sensible to utilize this energy by large national subsidy—an extension of work begun by the 1851 Commissioners: it is very wasteful not to use it. Once given the outlook and the hope, Universities will prepare students for the work. To-day there is no stimulus, and a youth taking up a scientific career must submit to years of drudgery and poverty, till his enthusiasm, save in exceptional cases, is well-nigh killed.

1.—UTILIZATION OF ENERGY.

Talking of energy, a whole series of very feasible achievements group themselves round the better utilization of energy. Every physical activity on the planet consists in the movement of matter; that sums up all that humanity can do on the material plane—

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whether it be the construction of engineering works, altering the configuration of the earth's surface, or the locomotion of goods from places of glut or uselessness (underground, for instance) to places of greater utility. In war-time the "goods" to be delivered are of hideous character, and the energy employed is of violently destructive quality, but it is effective for its purpose. All movement of matter requires energy; hence the discovery and development of sources of energy, and the best way of applying it with a minimum of waste, constitute the groundwork of scientific activity on the practical side.

At present, for all our energy we are dependent on the sun—on the present sun for food and vegetation of every kind, on the past sun for all combustible matter stored in the earth's crust. And both do we waste. The comparatively undeveloped opportunities for agriculture waste a wealth of present sunshine on barren soil or on soil far less fertile than it might be made. Here is one of the first and most obvious things to attend to: to apply on a large and comprehensive scale discoveries in scientific agriculture—those already made and those now in the making—many of which are the indirect outcome of the pioneering scientific work of Pasteur.

Much has been learnt, much more remains to be learnt, about the conditions for the productiveness of soil. The whole theory of manuring has undergone revolution, and the encouragement of one kind of micro-organism, with the destruction of another kind, has been shown able to open up untold possibilities of fruitfulness. The animal is against the vegetable, whether it be a protozoon devouring a bacterium, or whether it be a blight or insect pest operating on a larger scale. Life of any kind out of place and doing destructive work is akin to disease, and with full knowledge can be rigorously controlled. But none of these things can be done without long and continued study, and meanwhile the human race seems willing to suffer the ravages of cancer and other diseases, rather than make adequate provision for their enlightened study and efficient control.

Produce not of the land alone, but of the sea too, could be vastly increased by scientific study and attention; as Herdman, of Liverpool, and a few biological stations have proved. Applied biology, in alliance with agricultural chemistry, could render the nation independent of foreign supplies for its sustenance, and the working power of men and animals could be sustained by home-grown products. This kind of independence for the necessities of life is economical at all times, for the saving of purchase-money would be enormous, and in war-time it is necessary. Wonderful how little attention has been paid to this vital function of the land, the providing of food! In no other way can food be got.

Those who doubt the possibility of any country being able to feed its own inhabitants do not realize the usurious increase yielded by vegetation—on which in the last resort everything depends, whether on land or sea—and if they still have qualms, and talk about dwellers on an island taking in each other's washing, they should remember that this state of things is inevitably true for the earth as a whole. The planet is necessarily self-sustained. Humanity has to live on what it can grow, for no external supplies of food are available. The only question that need be raised about a smaller tract like Britain is whether it shall choose to depend for a time on the unexploited fertility of new lands across the sea, or whether it shall permanently increase the fertility of its own. Efficient utilization of present sunshine by proper treatment of the surface of the earth is surely an urgent matter for national attention and interest.

Waste of Resources.

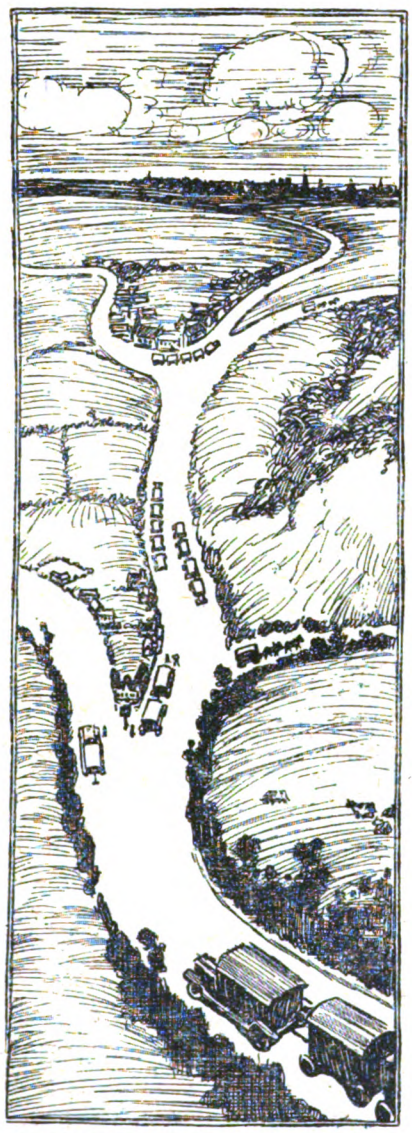
Waste of present sunshine is bad enough, but our waste of the accumulations of material and of energy deposited by the sunshine of the past—though probably no more serious—is still more conspicuous and flagrant. The phrase "destructive distillation" sums it up. We dig up coal, we send it about the country on railways, and then we destructively distil it. We do it in gasworks, making coke and gas and tar; we do it on the domestic hearth and in cooking ranges, liberating a quantity of unburnt matter up the chimney and burning the rest in a crude and wasteful manner; and we do it on a still larger scale in our factories and furnaces, thereby fouling the atmosphere and spoiling the lives of all who live in towns. People in general are not aware how much unburnt gas distils up a chimney from an ordinary coal-fire or closed stove; not visible matter or smoke alone thus escapes, but a quantity of inflammable gas goes up too. Every coal fire is a gasworks, and a bad one at that. Sometimes when a stove-lid is opened a flash of flame or small explosion shows what has been happening inside, from defect of air. Sometimes dense smoke rising from a smouldering open fire can be lit with a match.

Well, this destructive high-temperature

random distillation and imperfect crude combustion must surely be made to cease. Productive distillation, economical distillation, low-temperature controlled constructive distillation, must take its place. The valuable products must be distilled off and collected, not destroyed or burnt. Opportunity must be given for the formation of valuable products, and they must be extracted. Purified and properly treated, there is a wealth of material in the products distilled from coal. Benzol and toluol and oils generally, dyes, saccharin, aspirin, and many other drugs, ammonia for manures, and nitrogenous products for the manufacture of explosives, can all be economically and sanely produced, as well as the mere gas and coke to which they can all be reduced by the violence of unregulated treatment at too high a temperature. The trained chemical engineer, in this and many another department of industry, is of immense importance to the community.

II.—LOCOMOTION OR TRANSPORT.

After the growing of crops and the proper utilization of coal, what next is there that urgently calls for attention? Probably those other branches of engineering concerned in the locomotion of goods come next in importance. In transport of commodities about the earth's surface there are two main things to be attended to. One is not to convey things unnecessarily — certainly not to and fro; another is to convey them as directly as possible from producer to consumer with a minimum of handling, *i.e.*, with as little as possible of loading and unloading and transfer from one vehicle to another.



THE TRANSPORT PROBLEM: "GOOD MAIN ROADS AND MOTOR-WAGONS SEEM TO BE THE NATURAL SOLUTION."

Now the conveyance of goods from producer to consumer, or direct from where they are not wanted to where they are, can hardly be accomplished better than by road; for roads ramify through the country and go into out-of-the-way places as nothing else can. Good main roads and motor-wagons seem to be the natural solution. Railways and canals necessarily involve wharfage and handling, thus wasting labour and requiring delivery by carts at the end. Carts properly designed could do it all, for many kinds of produce. They can be either self-propelled, or a number of detachable wagons can be taken in tow along main roads modified or constructed for the purpose, and connected, as they naturally would be, with all the common road-system of the country. Such a scheme was advocated long ago by the shipowner, Alfred Holt, of Liverpool.

And what is to propel the motor-wagons? What but the oils produced from the coal and shale and other deposits in our own country? A large amount of this material now wasted can be extracted by proper treatment; and it will certainly help to supply the fuel for internal combustion engines of every kind—that great invention of the past half-century which has rendered flying possible, and which will exert an influence in many other less obvious ways. Among those ways I do not pick out aerial transit for special mention, simply because as a near possibility it is already well within the mind of the public. But plentiful fuel of the right kind is essential. The oil problem is bound to be faced by this country because of the needs of the Navy, but not to the Navy alone will it be helpful. Innumerable uses will be

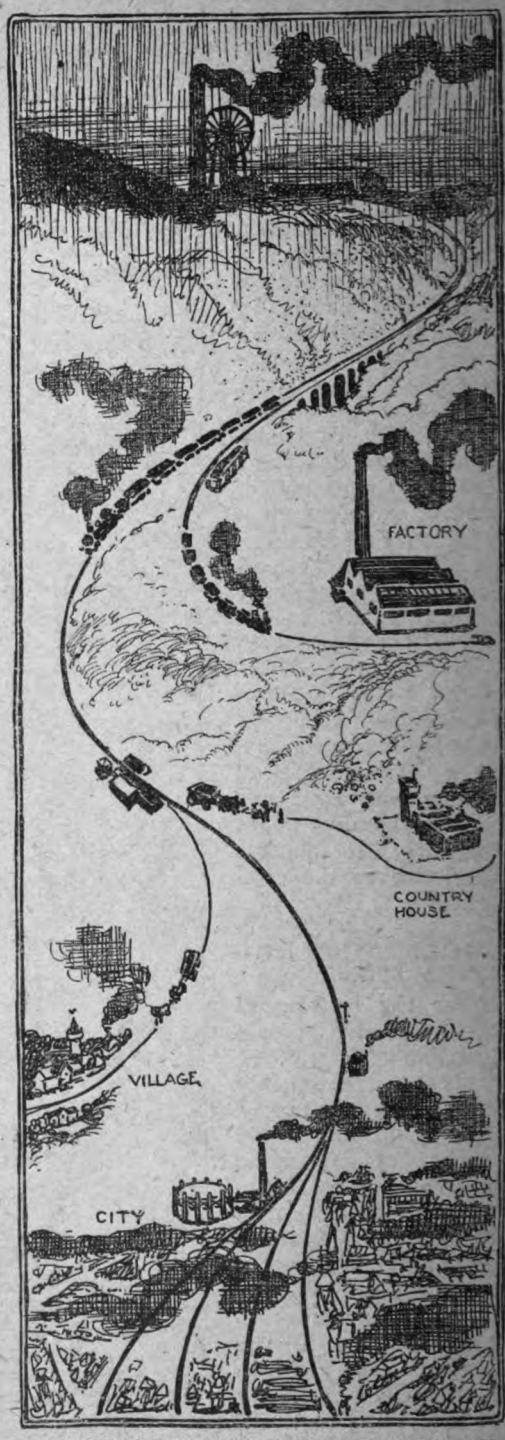
found for the material when it becomes cheap and plentiful. Oil is a valuable and exceptionally portable form of energy. Nor oil alone, but alcohol and other products which chemists can devise, can be pressed into the service too; only we must grow the raw material for their production and use it in a rational way.

Conveyance of Energy.

So long as we depend upon present sunshine, the agricultural biologist should be called in. So long as we depend upon combustion of material deposited by past sunshine, the advice of the chemist and chemical engineer is indispensable. For the utilization of electricity the physicist and mechanical engineer must give their powerful aid. The application of high tension electricity to growing crops is a matter which will receive more and more attention, for the results are very promising.

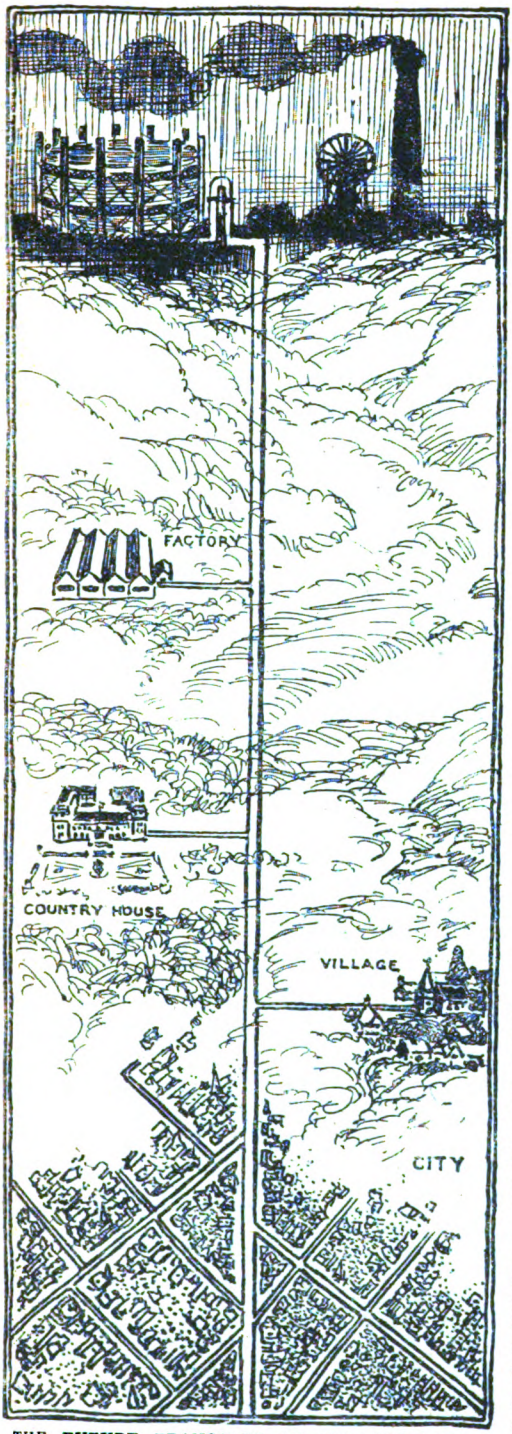
But electricity is not an original source of energy: it is the most perfect and tractable transmitter. Electricity is conspicuously our best traveller. The next most competent travellers are gas and water. Water is already conveyed, or rather allowed to convey itself, along a prepared pipe-line for long distances; but gas, at present, is mainly manufactured close to where it is wanted and only distributed locally, all the real travelling being done by coal.

Now coal is not a good traveller at all. It will not flow, or find its own level, or do anything helpful. It has to be conveyed on a truck or barge; it has to be loaded and unloaded and carted and carried and shovelled by hand. Not so gas. That will travel of itself in pipes; it can be turned on and off in a moment, and no one thinks of handling it or putting it on a railway. The South Staffordshire (Mond) Gas Company has done pioneering work in this direction. The wholesale laying on of gas for fuel would relieve railway congestion. Goods-trains should be used for other commodities than coal, save in those exceptional cases where delivery of some special kind of coal is necessary, or is deemed to be necessary until the required changes are examined and reported on and brought about. There are temporary, and there may be permanent, exceptions; but as a rule, and generally, coal is not the kind of thing that should be moved about, brought into our cities, and carried into our rooms. Bad and wasteful combustion is sure to follow, and afterwards the ashes have to be got rid of.



THE PRESENT TRANSPORT OF COAL-ENERGY: IN BULK.

No, the travelling, the conveyance of portable energy, should nearly all be done by gas. And gasworks should be near the pits,



THE FUTURE TRANSPORT OF COAL-ENERGY: AS GAS.

where economical distillation can be carried on, and every by-product separated out and saved. Electricity is chief traveller; gas should come second. Electricity is adapted for lighting and for power; gas for heating and cooking, as well as for mantle-lighting and power in some cases. By the intelligent and large-scale use of gas and electricity, each in its own place, there would be some chance of conducting domestic operations in a clean, economical, and satisfactory manner.

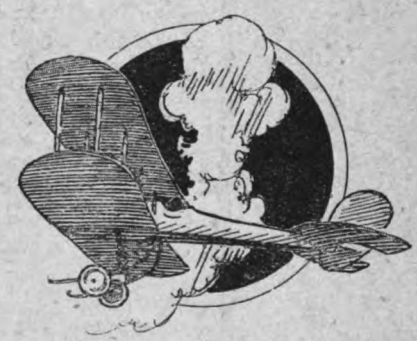
III.—DISCOVERY.

So far we have dealt with invention and application of already-won scientific knowledge. For all this but little discovery is needed; the facts are known; only inventive skill and administrative ability are needed to make use of them. Hence the importance of public interest in these matters. But what of the future? Is there any likely revolutionary step to be looked for and anticipated at some unknown time ahead? Are the sources of power already mentioned the only sources? Shall we always be limited to that irregular molecular agitation which we call "heat," and that clashing together of the atoms which we call "combustion"? Prediction is rash, and I do not attempt it, but science already indicates that there are other possibilities ahead, and that in the perhaps distant, perhaps near, future, some much more copious source of energy may be tapped and utilized by human artifice.

Intrinsic Energy of Matter.

For undoubtedly we live amid vast stores of energy. Material bodies are full of a kind of activity about which we know very little, and of which at present we are unable to make any use. We do not in the least know how to harness the energy locked up in the atoms of matter. But then, before the era of Watt and Newcomen, we did not know how to utilize the molecular energy of heat for the production of mechanical power. We now employ the one form of energy freely; we have only recently discovered the other. Ordinary matter seems so quiescent and placid and inert; yet to the eye of the physicist it is a scene of well-regulated but intense activity. Only here and there does it give any sign, only in some of the less stable elements is there any perceptible display of their concealed store of energy. Only from a few substances, of which radium is the type, does it overflow and give us a clear indication, akin to that of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, of the subterranean energy in the crust of the earth. These radio-active elements contain no more energy than the

others, but they are less stable, they cannot so effectively conceal what they have got. From them accordingly projectiles are emitted—of small size indeed, but with amazing velocity—a velocity far beyond anything known, except the velocity of light itself. They are shot off with a speed which, if there were no obstruction, would carry the particles from London to New York in the twinkling of an eye. And from a speck of radium millions of such atomic projectiles are shot every second—a sign surely of the tremendous forces which are lurking within. If the energy thus discovered in ordinary matter could be liberated at will, we should experience a violence beside which the suddenness of high explosive is gentle and leisurely. Will this intra-atomic energy ever be tapped, in a controlled and regulated manner, so that it can be applied to useful purposes? Who can tell?



IT SEEMS ABSURD TO COMPARE THE PACE OF A SNAIL WITH THE SPEED OF A FAST AEROPLANE, AND YET THE AEROPLANE'S FLIGHT WOULD SEEM A MERE HOVERING PITTED AGAINST THE FLIGHT OF AN ATOMIC PROJECTILE OF RADIUM, AND THIS IS A SLOW-COACH COMPARED WITH ETHERIAL ENERGY.

Etherial Energy.

And there is yet another still more secret store of energy, unknown, unsuspected, and undisplayed, barely discovered as yet, but inferred, which exceeds the atomic energy just mentioned as far as that exceeds in vigour the ordinary processes of combustion. Every cubic inch of the ether of space is full of the most portentous possibilities. It is full of an energy beside which the sporadic energy of material bodies shrinks into insignificance. The word "ethereal" signifies something filmy and unsubstantial; our modern conceptions of the ether of space are very different. If it exist at all, the ether is massive and substantial to an extraordinary degree—far more substantial than the gossamer-like structure to which our senses respond and which appeals to us as ordinary matter. So we must modify the adjective to suit this conception, and either use Milton's word "ethereous," or spell it differently as "etherial," so as to remove the ancient, inappropriate connotation from the word. I have reckoned that every cubic millimetre of the ether of space contains an amount of energy equal to the total output of a million horse-power station working day and night for thirty thousand years. But how to get at it—how experimentally to establish its existence by direct demonstration and not by inference—neither I nor anyone at present has the slightest idea. But unless the physics of the past quarter of a century is badly mistaken, the energy is there. And it would be foolish to set a limit to the possibilities of discovery. Once the slightest clue is found for the detection and apprehension of this etherial energy—and no such clue is even dimly in sight at present—its utilization will only be a question of time. When that time comes—if ever it does—every other source of energy will sink into insignificance, for the store is omnipresent and absolutely exhaustless.

Till those times—far ahead in all probability—it behoves us of the present day and generation to employ economically those resources which as yet are available to us, and to extract from them all that they contain. For if they were prematurely exhausted, civilization would be in serious difficulties; moreover, the effort to use things well and wisely, instead of ignorantly and carelessly, is a wholesome training and exercise for our present life.

So the immediate practical moral is:—

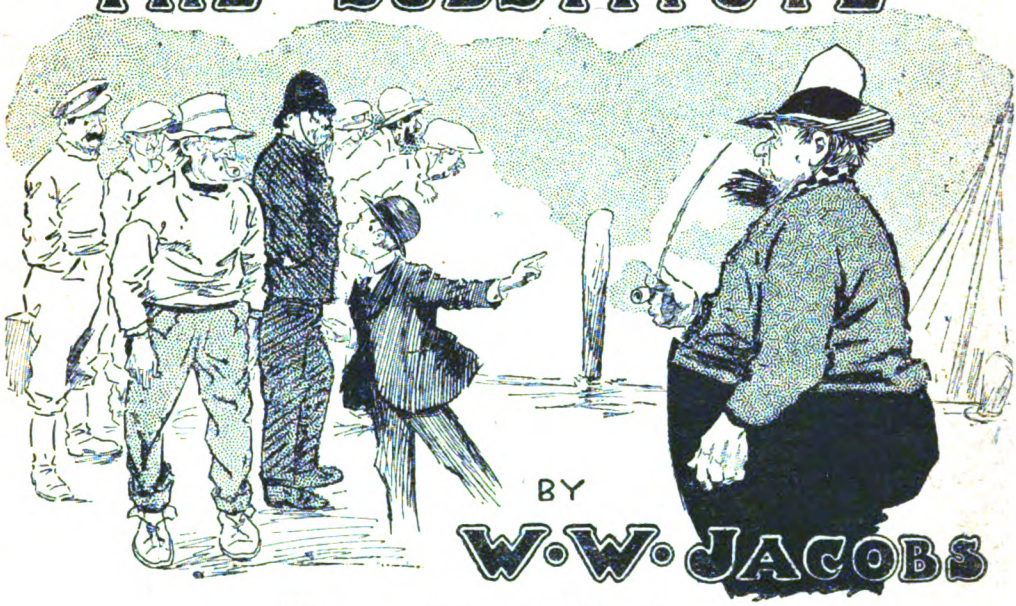
1. To sustain and enfranchise scientific research of every kind, in an ample and even a lavish manner.

2. To utilize present sunshine by application of scientific agriculture so as to increase the fertility of the earth's surface.

3. To treat and utilize properly all the products deposited by the sunshine of the past, and cease to deal with them in a wasteful way.

4. To encourage every advance in pure science, and to realize that, however remote from daily life it may at first seem, every discovery may in the long run have the most astounding consequences.

THE SUBSTITUTE



BY

W. W. JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

THE night-watchman had just returned to the office fire after leaving it to attend a ring at the wharf bell. He sat for some time puffing fiercely at his pipe and breathing heavily.

"Boys!" he said, at last. "That's the third time this week, and yet if I was to catch one and skin 'im alive I suppose I should get into trouble over it. Even 'is own father and mother would make a fuss, most like. Some people have boys, and other people 'ave the trouble of 'em. Our street's full of 'em, and the way they carry on would make a monkey-'ouse ashamed of itself. The man next door to me's got seven of 'em, and when I spoke to 'im friendly about it over a pint one night, he put the blame on 'is wife.

"The worst boy I ever knew used to be office-boy in this 'ere office, and I can't understand now why I wasn't 'ung for him. Undersized little chap he was, with a face the colour o' bad pie-crust, and two little black eyes like shoe-buttons. To see 'im with his little white cuffs, and a stand-up collar, and a little black bow, and a little bowler-'at, was enough to make a cat laugh. I told 'im so one day, and arter that we knew where we was. Both of us.

"By rights he ought to 'ave left the office at six—just my time for coming on. As it was, he used to stay late, purtending to work 'ard so as to get a rise. Arter all the clerks 'ad gorn 'ome he used to sit perched up on a stool yards too 'igh for him, with one eye on the ledger and the other looking through the winder at me. I remember once going off for arf-a-pint, and when I come back I found 'im with a policeman, two carmen, and all the hands off of the *Maid Marian*, standing on the edge of the jetty, waiting for me to come up. He said that, not finding me on the wharf, 'e made sure that I must 'ave tumbled overboard, as he felt certain that I wouldn't neglect my dooty while there was breath in my body; but 'e was sorry to find 'e was mistook. He stood there talking like a little clergyman, until one of the carmen knocked his 'at over 'is eyes, and then he forgot 'imself for a bit.

"Arter that I used to wait until he 'ad gorn afore I 'ad my arf-pint. I didn't want my good name taken away, and I had to be careful, and many's the good arf-pint I 'ad to refuse because that little imitation monkey was sitting in the office drawing faces on 'is blotting-paper. But sometimes it don't matter 'ow careful you are, you make a mistake.

"There was a little steamer, called the *Eastern Monarch*, used to come up here in them days, once a week. Fat little tub she

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was, with a crew o' fattish old men, and a skipper that I didn't like. He'd been in the coasting trade all 'is life, while I've knocked about all over the world, but to hear 'im talk you'd think he knew more about things than I did.

"'Eddication, Bill,' he ses one evening, 'that's the thing! You can't argufy without it; you only talk foolish, like you are doing now.'

"'There's eddication and there's common sense,' I ses. 'Some people 'as one and some people 'as the other. Give me common sense.'

"'That's wot you want,' he ses, nodding.

"'And, o' course,' I ses, looking at 'im, 'there's some people 'asn't got either one *or* the other.'

"The office-boy came out of the office afore he could think of an answer, and the pair of 'em stood there talking to show off their cleverness, till their tongues ached. I took up my broom and went on sweeping, and they was so busy talking long words they didn't know the meaning of to each other that they was arf choked with dust afore they noticed it. When they did notice it they left off using long words, and the skipper tried to hurt my feelings with a few short ones 'e knew.

"'It's no good wasting your breath on 'im,' ses the boy. 'You might as well talk to a beer-barrel.'

"He went off, dusting 'imself down with his little pocket-'ankercher, and arter the skipper 'ad told me wot he'd like to do, only he was too sorry for me to do it, 'e went back to the ship to put on a clean collar, and went off for the evening.

"He always used to go off by hisself of a evening, and I used to wonder 'ow he passed the time. Then one night I found out.

"I had just come out of the Bull's Head, and stopped to look round afore going back to the wharf, when I see a couple o' people standing on the swing-bridge saying 'Good-bye' to each other. One of 'em was a man and the other wasn't.

"'Evening, cap'n,' I ses, as he came towards me, and gave a little start. 'I didn't know you 'ad brought your missis up with you this trip.'

"'Evening, Bill,' he ses, very peaceful. 'Wot a lovely evening!'

"'Bee-utiful!' I ses.

"'So fresh,' ses the skipper, sniffing in some of the air.

"'Makes you feel quite young agin,' I ses.

"He didn't say nothing to that, except to look at me out of the corner of 'is eye; and stepping on to the wharf had another look at the sky to admire it, and then went aboard his ship. If he 'ad only stood me a pint, and trusted me, things might ha' turned out different.

"Quite by chance I happened to be in the Bull's Head a week arterwards, and, quite by chance, as I came out I saw the skipper saying 'Good-bye' on the bridge agin. He seemed to be put out about something, and when I said 'Wot a lovely evening it would be if only it wasn't raining 'ard!' he said something about knocking my 'ead off.

"'And you keep your nose out o' my bisness,' he ses, very fierce.

"'Your bisness!' I ses. 'Wot bisness?'

"'There's some people as might like to know that you leave the wharf to look arter itself while you're sitting in a pub swilling gallons and gallons o' beer,' he ses, in a nasty sort o' way. 'Live and let live, that's my motter.'

"'I don't know wot you're talking about,' I ses. 'but it don't matter anyways. I've got a clear conscience; that's the main thing. I'm as open as the day, and there's nothing about me that I'd mind anybody knowing. Wot a pity it is everybody can't say the same!'

"I didn't see 'im saying 'Good-bye' the next week or the week arter that either, but the third week, arter just calling in at the Bull's Head, I strolled on casual-like and got as far as the bottom of Tower Hill afore I remembered myself. Turning the corner, I a'most fell over the skipper, wot was right in the fairway, shaking 'ands with his lady-friend under the lamp-post. Both of 'em started, and I couldn't make up my mind which gave me the most unpleasant look.

"'Peep-bo!' I ses, cheerful-like.

"He stood making a gobbling noise at me, like a turkey.

"'Give me quite a start, you did,' I ses. 'I didn't dream of you being there.'

"'Get off!' he ses, spluttering. 'Get off, afore I tear you limb from limb! 'Ow dare you follow me about and come spying round corners at me? Wot d'ye mean by it?'

"I stood there with my arms folded acrost my chest, as calm as a cucumber. The other party stood there watching us, and wot 'e could 'ave seen in her, I can't think. She was dressed more like a man than a woman, and it would have taken the good looks of twenty like her to 'ave made one barmaid. I stood looking at 'er like a man in a dream.

"'PEEP-BO!' I SES, CHEERFUL-LIKE."

"'Well, will you know me agin?' she ses, in a nasty cracked sort of voice.

"'I could pick you out of a million,' I ses —'if I wanted to.'

"'Clear out!' ses the skipper. 'Clear out! And thank your stars there's a lady present.'

"'Don't take no notice of 'im, Captin Pratt,' ses the lady. 'He's beneath you. You only encourage people like that by taking notice of 'em. Good-bye.'

"She held out her 'and, and while the skipper was shaking it I began to walk back to the wharf. I 'adn't gorn far afore I heard 'im coming up behind me, and next moment 'e was walking alongside and saying things to try and make me lose my temper.

"'Ah, it's a pity your pore missis can't 'ear you!' I ses. 'I expect she thinks you are stowed away in your bunk dreaming of 'er, instead of saying things about a face as don't belong to you.'

"'You mind your bisness,' he ses, shouting. 'And not so much about my missis! D'ye hear? Wot's it got to do with you? Who asked you to shove your oar in?'

"'You're quite mistook,' I ses, very calm. 'I'd no idea that there was anything on as shouldn't be. I was never more surprised in my life. If anybody 'ad told me, I shouldn't 'ave believed 'em. I couldn't. Knowing you, and knowing 'ow respectable you 'ave always purtended to be, and also and likewise that you ain't no chicken——'

"I thought 'e was going to 'ave a fit. He 'opped about, waving his arms and stuttering and going on in such a silly way that I didn't like to be seen with 'im. Twice he knocked my 'at off, and arter telling him wot would 'appen if 'e did it agin, I walked off and left him.

"Even then 'e wasn't satisfied, and, arter coming on to the wharf and following me up and down like a little dog, he got in front of me and told me some more things he 'ad thought of.

"'If I catch you spying on me agin,' he ses, 'you'll wish you'd never been born!'

"'You get aboard and 'ave a quiet sleep,' I ses. 'You're wandering in your mind.'

"'The lady you saw me with,' he ses, looking at me very fierce, 'is a friend o' mine that I meet sometimes for the sake of her talk.'

"'Talk!' I ses, staring at 'im. 'Talk! Wot, can't *one* woman talk enough for you? Is your missis dumb? or wot?'

"'You don't understand,' he ses, cocking up 'is nose at me. 'She's a interleckshal woman; full of eddication and information.

"THE GUV'NOR CAME UP TO ME NEXT DAY, TALKING ABOUT 'OW EASY IT WAS TO GET NIGHT-WATCHMEN."

When my missis talks, she talks about the price o' things and says she must 'ave more money. Or else she talks about things I've done, or sometimes things I 'aven't done. It's all one to her. There's no pleasure in that sort o' talk. It don't *help* a man.'

"'I never 'eard of any talk as did,' I ses.

"'I don't suppose you did,' he ses, sneering-like. 'Now, to-night, fust of all, we talked about the House of Lords and whether it ought to be allowed; and arter that she gave me quite a little lecture on insecks.'

"'It don't seem proper to me,' I ses. 'I 'ave spoke to my wife about 'em once or twice, but I should no more think of talking about such things to a single lady——'

"He began to jump about agin as if I'd bit 'im, and he 'ad so much to say about my 'ed and blocks of wood that I pretty near lost my temper. I should ha' lost it with some men, but 'e was a very stiff-built chap and as hard as nails.

"'Beer's your trouble,' he ses, at last. 'Fust of all you put it down, and then it climbs up and soaks wot little brains you've got. Wot you want is a kind friend to prevent you from getting it.'

"I don't know wot it was, but I 'ad a sort of sinking feeling inside as 'e spoke, and next evening, when I saw 'im walk to the end of the jetty with the office-boy and stand there talking to 'im with his 'and on his shoulder, it came on worse than ever. And I put two and two together when the guv'nor came up to me next day, and, arter talking about 'dooty' and 'ow easy it was to get night-watchmen, mentioned in 'a off-'and sort of way that, if I left the wharf at all between six and six, I could stay away altogether.

"I didn't answer 'im a word. I might ha' told 'im that there was plenty of people arter me ready to give me double the money, but I knew he could never get anybody to do their dooty by the wharf like I 'ad done, so I kept quiet. It's the way I treat my missis nowadays, and it pays; in the old days I used to waste my breath answering 'er back.

"I wouldn't ha' minded so much if it 'adn't ha' been for that boy. He used to pass me, as 'e went off of a evening, with a little sly smile on 'is ugly little face, and sometimes when I was standing at the gate he'd give a sniff or two and say that he could smell beer,

and he *supposed* it came from the Bull's Head.

"It was about three weeks arter the guv'nor 'ad forgot 'imself, and I was standing by the gate one evening, when I saw a woman coming along carrying a big bag in her 'and. I 'adn't seen 'er afore, and when she stopped in front of me and smiled I was on my guard at once. I don't smile at other people, and I don't expect them to smile at me.

"'At last!' she ses, setting down 'er bag and giving me another smile. 'I thought I was never going to get 'ere.'

"I coughed and backed inside a little bit on to my own ground. I didn't want to 'ave that little beast of a office-boy spreading tales about me.

"'I've come up to 'ave a little fling,' she ses, smiling away harder than ever. 'My husband don't know I'm 'ere. He thinks I'm at 'ome.'

"I think I went back pretty near three yards.

"'I come up by train,' she ses, nodding.

"'Yes,' I ses, very severe, 'and wot about going back by it?'

"'Oh, I shall go back by ship,' she ses. 'Wot time do you expect the *Eastern Monarch* up?'

"'Well,' I ses, 'ardly knowing wot to make of 'er, 'she ought to be up this tide; but there's no reckoning on wot an old washtub with a engine like a sewing-machine inside 'er will do.'

"'Oh, indeed!' she ses, leaving off smiling very sudden. 'Oh, indeed! My husband might 'ave something to say about that.'

"'Your 'usband?' I ses.

"'Captin Pratt,' she ses, drawing 'erself up. 'I'm Mrs. Pratt. He left yesterday morning, and I've come up 'ere by train to give 'im a little surprise.'

"You might ha' knocked me down with a feather, and I stood there staring at her with my mouth open, trying to think.

"'Take care,' I ses at last. 'Take care as you don't give 'im too *much* of a surprise!'

"'Wot do you mean?' she ses, firing up.

"'Nothing,' I ses. 'Nothing, only I've known 'usbands in my time as didn't like being surprised—that's all. If you take my advice, you'll go straight back home agin.'

"'I'll tell 'im wot you say,' she ses, 'as soon as 'is ship comes in.'

"That's a woman all over; the moment they get into a temper they want to hurt somebody; and I made up my mind at once that, if anybody was going to be 'urt, it wasn't me. And, besides, I thought it might be for the skipper's good—in the long run.

"I broke it to her as gentle as I could. I didn't tell 'er much, I just gave her a few 'ints. Just enough to make her ask for more.

"'And mind,' I ses, '*I* don't want to be brought into it. If you should 'appen to take a fancy into your 'ed to wait behind a pile of empties till the ship comes in, and then slip out and foller your 'usband and give 'im the little surprise you spoke of, it's nothing to do with me.'

"'I understand,' she ses, biting her lip. 'There's no need for 'im to know that I've been on the wharf at all.'

"I gave 'er a smile—I thought she deserved it—but she didn't smile back. She was rather a nice-looking woman in the ordinary way, but I could easy see 'ow temper spoils a woman's looks. She stood there giving little shivers and looking as if she wanted to bite somebody.

"'I'll go and hide now,' she ses.

"'Not yet,' I ses. 'You'll 'ave to wait till that little blackbeetle in the office 'as gorn.'

"'Blackbeetle?' she ses, staring.

"'Office-boy,' I ses. 'He'd better not see you at all. S'pose you go off for a bit and come back when I whistle?'

"Afore she could answer the boy came out of the office, ready to go 'ome. He gave a little bit of a start when 'e saw me talking to a lady, and then 'e nips down sudden, about a couple o' yards away, and begins to do 'is bootlace up. It took 'im some time, because he 'ad to undo it fust, but 'e finished it at last, and arter a quick look at Mrs. Pratt, and one at me that I could ha' smacked his 'ed for, 'e went off whistling and showing 'is little cuffs.

I stepped out into the road and watched 'im out o' sight. Then I told Mrs. Pratt to pick up 'er bag and foller me.

"As it 'appened there was a big pile of empties in the corner of the ware'ouse wall, just opposite the *Eastern Monarch's* berth. It might ha' been made for the job, and, arter I 'ad tucked her away behind and given 'er a box to sit on, I picked up my broom and began to make up for lost time.

"She sat there as quiet as a cat watching a mouse'ole, and I was going on with my work, stopping every now and then to look and see whether the *Monarch* was in sight, when I 'appened to turn round and see the office-boy standing on the edge of the wharf with his back to the empties, looking

down at the water. I nearly dropped my broom.

"'"'Ullo!' I ses, going up to 'im. 'I thought you 'ad gorn 'ome.'

"'"I was going,' he ses, with a nasty oily little smile, 'and then it struck me all of a sudden 'ow lonely it was for you *all alone 'ere*, and I come back to keep you company.'

"He winked at something acrost the river as 'e spoke, and I stood there thinking my 'ardest wot was the best thing to be done. I couldn't get Mrs. Pratt away while 'e was there; besides which I felt quite sartain she wouldn't go. The only 'ope I 'ad was that he'd get tired of spying on me and go away before he found out she was 'iding on the wharf.

"I walked off in a unconcerned way—not too far—and, with one eye on 'im and the other on where Mrs. Pratt was 'iding, went on with my work. There's nothing like 'ard work when a man is worried, and I was a'most forgetting my troubles, when I looked up and saw the *Monarch* coming up the river.

"She turned to come into 'er berth, with the skipper shouting away on the bridge and making as much fuss as if 'e was berthing a liner. I helped to make 'er fast, and the skipper, arter 'e had 'ad a good look round to see wot 'e could find fault with, went below to clean 'imself.

"He was up agin in about ten minutes, with a clean collar and a clean face, and a blue necktie that looked as though it 'ad got yeller measles. Good temper 'e was in, too, and arter pulling the office-boy's ear, gentle, as 'e was passing, he stopped for a moment to 'ave a word with 'im.

"'"'Bit late, ain't you?' he ses.

"'"'I've been keeping a eye on the watchman,' ses the boy. 'He works better when 'e knows there's somebody watching 'im.'

"'"'Look 'ere!' I ses. 'You take yourself off; I've 'ad about enough of you. You take your little face 'ome and ask your mother to wipe its nose. Strickly speaking, you've no right to be on the wharf at all at this time.'

"'"'I've as much right as other people,' he ses, giving me a wicked look. 'I've got more right than some people, p'r'aps.'

"He stooped down deliberate and, picking up a bit o' coke from the 'eap by the crane, pitched it over at the empties.

"'"'Stop that!' I ses, shouting at 'im.

"'"'What for?' 'e ses, shying another piece. 'Why shouldn't I?'

"'"'Cos I won't 'ave it,' I ses. 'D'ye hear? Stop it!'

"I rushed at 'im as he sent another piece over, and for the next two or three minutes

"THE OFFICE-BOY NIPS DOWN SUDDEN AND BEGINS TO DO 'IS BOOTLACE UP."

'e was dodging me and chucking coke at the empties, with the fool of a skipper standing by laughing, and two or three of the crew leaning over the side and cheering 'im on.

"'All right,' he ses, at last, dusting 'is hands together, 'I've finished. There's no need to make such a fuss over a bit of coke.'

"'You've wasted pretty near arf a 'undered-weight,' I ses. 'I've a good mind to report you.'

"'Don't do that, watchman!' he ses, in a pitiful voice. 'Don't do that! 'Ere, I tell you wot I'll do. I'll pick it all up agin.'

"Afore I could move 'and or foot he 'ad shifted a couple o' cases out of 'is way and was in among the empties. I stood there dazed-like while two bits o' coke came flying back past my 'ed; then I 'eard a loud whistle, and 'e came out agin with 'is eyes rolling and 'is mouth wide open.

"'Wot's the matter?' ses the skipper, staring at 'im.

"'I—I—I'm sorry, watchman,' ses that beast of a boy, purtending 'e was 'ardly able to speak. 'I'd no idea——'

"'All right,' I ses, very quick.

"'Wot's the matter?' ses the skipper agin; and as 'e spoke it came over me like a flash wot a false persition I was in, and wot a nasty-tempered man 'e could be when 'e liked.

"'Why didn't you tell me you'd got a lady-friend there?' ses the boy, shaking his 'ed at me. 'Why, I might 'ave hit 'er with a bit o' coke, and never forgiven myself!'

"'*Lady-friend!*' ses the skipper, with a start. 'Oh, Bill, I *am* surprised!'

"My throat was so dry I couldn't 'ardly speak. 'It's my missis,' I ses, at last.

"'Your missis?' ses the skipper. 'Wot's she 'iding behind there for?'

"'She—she's shy,' I ses. 'Always was, all 'er life. She can't bear other people. She likes to be alone with me.'

"'Oh, watchman!' ses the boy. 'I wonder where you expect to go to?'

"'Missis my grandmother!' ses the skipper, with a wink. 'I'm going to 'ave a peep.'

"'Stand back!' I ses, pushing 'im off. 'I don't spy on you, and I don't want you to come spying on me. You get off! D'ye hear me? Get off!'

"We had a bit of a struggle, till my foot slipped, and while I was waving my arms and trying to get my balance back 'e made a dash for the empties. Next moment he was roaring like a mad bull that 'ad sat down in a sorsepan of boiling water, and rushing back agin to kill me.

"I believe that if it 'adn't ha' been for a couple o' lightermen wot 'ad just come on to the jetty from their skiff, and two of his own 'ands, he'd ha' done it. Crazy with passion 'e was, and it was all the four of 'em could do to hold 'im. Every now and then

"HE STOOPED DOWN DELIBERATE AND, PICKING UP A BIT O' COKE, PITCHED IT OVER AT THE EMPTIES."

he'd get a yard nearer to me, and then they'd pull 'im back a couple o' yards and beg of 'im to listen to reason and 'ear wot I 'ad to say. And as soon as I started and began to tell 'em about 'is lady-friend he broke out worse than ever. People acrost the river must ha' wondered wot was 'appening. There was two lightermen, two sailormen, me and the skipper, and Mrs. Pratt all talking at once, and nobody listening but the office-boy. And in the middle of it all the wicket was pushed open and the 'ed of the lady wot all the trouble was about peeped in, and drew back agin.

"'There you are!' I ses, shouting my 'ardest. 'There she is. That's the lady I was telling you about. Now, then: put 'em face to face and clear my character. Don't let 'er escape.'

"One o' the lightermen let go o' the skipper and went arter 'er, and, just as I was giving the other three a helping 'and, 'e came back with 'er. Mrs. Pratt caught 'er breath, and as for the skipper 'e didn't know where to look, as the saying is. I just saw the lady give 'im one quick look, and then afore I could dream of wot was coming she rushes up to me and flings 'er long, bony arms round my neck.

"'Why, William!' she ses, 'wot's the matter? Why didn't you meet me? Didn't you get my letter? Or 'ave you ceased to care for me?'

"'Let go!' I ses, struggling. 'Let go! D'ye 'ear? Wot d'ye mean by it? You've got 'old of the wrong one.'

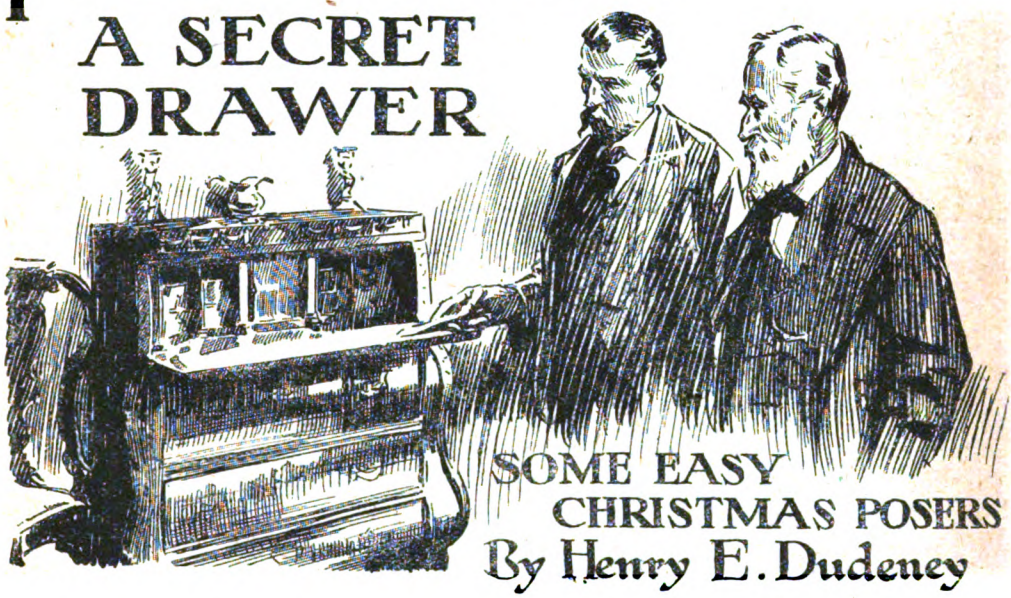
"'Oh, William!' she ses, arf strangling me. ''Ow can you talk to me like that? Where's your 'art?'

"I never knew a woman so strong. I don't suppose she'd ever 'ad the chance of getting 'er arms round a man's neck afore, and she hung on to me as if she'd never let go. And all the time I was trying to explain things to them over 'er shoulder I could see they didn't believe a word I was saying. One o' the lightermen said I was a 'wonder,' and the other said I was a 'fair cough-drop.' *Me!*

"She got tired of it at last, but by that time I was so done up I couldn't say a word. I just dropped on to a box and sat there getting my breath back while the skipper forgave 'is wife for 'er unjust suspicions of 'im—but told 'er not to do it agin—and the office-boy was saying I'd surprised even 'im. The last I saw of the lady-friend, the two lightermen was helping 'er to walk to the gate, and the two sailormen was follering 'er up behind, carrying 'er pocket-'ankercher and umbrella."

"'OH, WILLIAM!' SHE SES, ARF STRANGLING ME. ''OW CAN YOU TALK TO ME LIKE THAT? WHERE'S YOUR 'ART?'"

PUZZLES FROM A SECRET DRAWER



SOME EASY CHRISTMAS POSERS

By Henry E. Dudeney

"HERE is Betty Marchant's bureau, and I want you to help me find its secret drawer," said my friend Godfrey Marchant, as he pointed to a handsome piece of inlaid mahogany furniture. I was spending Christmas a year or two before the war with my friend and his family in an old West Somerset town. The bureau had belonged to his great-aunt Betty, and had descended to him with the tradition that it held a secret drawer, though no member of the family had ever succeeded in discovering it since the old lady's death many years ago.

"The first thing to do is to find its location," I said, "and then try to gain an entry to the drawer. I knew a dealer in antique furniture who first suspected a secret drawer in such a bureau by the rattling of a coin during removal. He soon discovered where the drawer lay, but he actually had to take the bureau to pieces before he could find a way of opening it. After he had restored it he showed me the ingenious contrivance in working."

By taking careful measurements we soon discovered a space unaccounted for. It lay behind a decorated pillar that separated the long, shallow drawers on each side of it. This pillar was immovable, and we failed to discover any spring that would liberate it. Then, remembering what the dealer had shown me, I obtained a long kitchen skewer. Inserting this in a small aperture, I pushed it home, and discovered that while doing so I could slide the pillar to one side and so disclose a slender upright drawer with a small drop handle. It then took us quite an hour to find that by pressing with the fingers on a spot at the back of one of the other drawers, in a very unsuspected place, the puzzle was solved.

"I hope it is not a Pandora's box of mystery," said Marchant, "and that no terrible family revelations will follow from its being opened."

He drew out the drawer and shook its contents reverently on to the table. All that fell out was a flat bundle of manuscript tied in faded pink ribbon and bearing the superscription, "BETTY MARCHANT, HER FAVOURITE PUZZLES." I could not resist a laugh.

"My great-aunt," Godfrey explained, "had a weakness for riddles and puzzles of every kind, so I have been told, and I well remember my grandmother saying to me as a boy, when I was perplexed about something, 'You should go to my sister Betty; she is both a Sphinx and an Œdipus in one, for she is prone to devise strange puzzles of her own and to rede the riddles of other folk.' As it is Christmas Eve, these will be the very things to entertain us. Let us join the rest of the family."

After just explaining that the "rest of the family" consisted of Mrs. Marchant, their two children (Muriel, aged seventeen, and Tom, aged twelve), and Uncle Dick, I will proceed at once to their examination of these Early Victorian posers, selecting only those that are easy, yet likely to be of some interest to modern readers.

AN ELEGANT CHARADE.

This was Aunt Betty's title for the first item we examined, and it read as follows: "I am indebted to Major Barrington for this elegant charade: In my *first* my *second* sat, my *third* and *fourth* I ate."

Nobody solved it on the first examination, and we

resolved not to look at the solutions, which were all together at the end, until the next day.

LADY ANNE'S RIBBON.

"Lady Anne Lockyer and her daughter went, they say, into Taunton to buy ten yards of ribbon; but the daughter only needed three-fifths of the portion required by her mother. Can you tell me the length of Lady Anne's share?"

"I wish she had said something about the price of the ribbon," said Mrs. Marchant.

"Yes, that would be interesting to you, doubtless," replied Uncle Dick, "but it does not happen to come into the question."

STEALING THE BELL-ROPES.

"We all know that," said Tom, as his father announced the title. "You have to find the length of the ropes." But he was wrong: none of us had heard it before.

"A wicked robber broke into the belfry of Stoke St. Gregory church, and though he had nothing to assist him but his pocket-knife he contrived to steal nearly the complete lengths of the two bell-ropes, which passed through holes in the lofty boarded ceiling. How did he effect his purpose? Of course, there was no ladder or aught else to assist him."

"I can understand," said Uncle Dick, "that he might steal one rope and slide down the other, but how he cut the two, or any considerable portion of them, without a bad fall, beats me."

I suggested a possible plan, which turned out to be correct.

THE TWO TINDER-BOXES.

"A poor man came to the door desiring to sell two tinder-boxes. He offered me one for ninepence, or both for fifteen pence, declaring that his profit would be exactly the same whether I purchased one or both. Taking his word for this assertion, what must each of the boxes have cost him? They were both alike."

As this question quite beat Tom, his uncle pointed out that a very little thought, without any use of pencil or paper, ought to have given him the answer at once. Yet how many of our younger readers will see its utter simplicity at a glance? It is a pretty little test of mental alertness in the young.

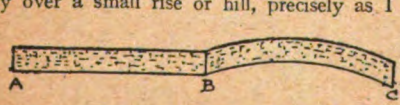
MRS. HEMBROW'S RIDDLE.

"Ladies, a riddle I submit.
To fifty just add one,
And having thereby shown your wit,
You may my whole put on."

"Clearly some item of a lady's attire," said Muriel; but it perplexed her for a few minutes.

THE BRICKLAYER'S TASK.

"When my uncle Jasper walled in his estate near the Quantocks one of the walls was partly level and partly over a small rise or hill, precisely as I have



shown in the drawing herewith, wherein it will be observed that the distance from A to B is the same as from B to C. Now, the master-builder desired and claimed that he should be paid more for the part that was on the hill than for the part that was level, since (at least, so he held) it demanded the use of more material. But Uncle Jasper insisted that he should be paid less for that part. It was a nice point, over which they nearly had recourse to the law. Which of them was in the right?"

"I should have no difficulty in settling that question," declared Uncle Dick; but he was quite wrong in his opinion.

THE CARPET AND THE CUP.

"An Eastern monarch, wishing to try the wits of his courtiers, once had a small square carpet spread on the floor, and on the centre thereof he stood a jewelled cup. This cup he offered to the person who could, not having any instrument or mechanical assistance whatever, pick it up without stepping, or resting in any way, on the carpet. One after another they essayed to perform the feat, but all failed. Their arms not being long enough, they always overbalanced themselves and fell on the carpet. When all finally confessed their inability to win the cup, the king showed them how anybody might do so without the slightest difficulty. By what manner of means did the monarch perform the feat?"

"I should have suspended a rope from the ceiling and swung on it," said Muriel

"But that would be mechanical assistance," objected her uncle.

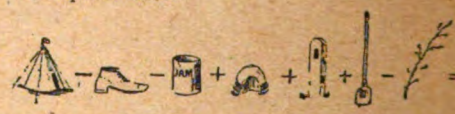
"I should have walked on my hands and got it that way," Tom declared.

"Which would be resting on the carpet."

Mrs. Marchant was the first to suggest the answer, which proved to be correct.

PICTORIAL ARITHMETIC.

"This," said Marchant, "appears to be a sort of arithmetical equation, with pictures instead of figures and letters. Some of the pictures have to be added to one another and others subtracted, so as to produce the required result."



"But how can you extract jam from a boot?" asked Tom. "You can take honey from a hive, but jam from a boot is absurd!"

Yet after a little thought, and selecting the words that the pictures probably represented, they arrived at the correct answer.

THE MILLER'S TOLL.

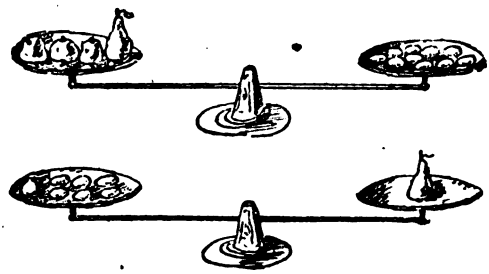
"Before writing this puzzle I desire to record a few little witty trifles that I have come across on the subject of bread. Parson Lethbridge once asked me this riddle: 'Take away the bees from something we eat and make it read out loud.' His answer was 'bread and butter,' which become 'read and utter.' Then my father once asked me if I could spell 'need,' as applied to bread. I said that I certainly could, for it was 'k-n-e-a-d.' Then he laughed and replied, 'My dear, you do not knead bread: you knead dough and need bread. It should be n-e-e-d.' Finally, my Aunt Martha always insisted that the rule of three was false and could not be trusted. For example, if she asked this question: If a starving man will eat a large loaf in an hour, how many will he eat in a day of twenty-four hours? The answer you always get, she said, was twenty-four loaves, which is absurd. No man could eat twenty-four loaves in a day!

"Now, the miller's puzzle is this: A miller near

Bridgwater, when he ground corn for his neighbours, always took one-tenth of the flour as toll. Mrs. Andrews, the widow, received exactly one bushel of flour after the toll had been taken. She called to ask me to tell her how much flour was produced from the grinding of her wheat before the toll was taken from it. What should my answer have been?"

MISSIONARIES AND CANNIBALS.

"The late Bishop of Bath and Wells told my father a strange story of three missionaries and three cannibals, who had to cross a river in a small boat that would only carry two men at a time. Being acquainted with the peculiar appetites of the cannibals, the missionaries could never allow their companions to be in a majority on either side of the river. How did they manage to get across?"



"I think we all know that puzzle pretty well," broke in Muriel.

"Wait a minute," said Marchant. "There is another sentence that I have not read. 'Only one of the missionaries and one of the cannibals could row the boat.' That fact seems to supply an additional point of interest."

The company attempted this for some time, moving various small articles, representing the missionaries and the cannibals, across the table. I think it was Uncle Dick who first got it right. The little difficulty they found was that when the missionary who could row brought across the boat and wanted to send it back with two cannibals, the cannibal who could row always chanced to be on the other side.

THE SEDGEMOOR FESTIVITIES.

"When young Lord Martock came of age there were great festivities at Sedgemoor Park, and a considerable number of the townspeople of Yeovil banded together for a day's outing and pleasure. They pressed into service nearly every wagon in the place, and each wagon was to carry the same number of persons. Half-way to the park ten of these wagons broke down, so it was necessary for every remaining wagon to carry one more person. Unfortunately, when they started for home it was found that fifteen more wagons were in such bad condition that they could not be used; so there were three more persons in every wagon than when they started out from Yeovil in the morning. Now, how many persons were there in the party?"

"The story does not say much for the stability of Yeovil wagons in those days," said Mrs. Marchant.

Uncle Dick suggested that perhaps the roads were particularly bad. Tom thought that so many breakdowns would add to the fun of the outing; while Muriel wanted to find the answer, just to learn whether the poor folk were very overcrowded on that return journey. So various are the interests often excited by a little puzzle.

WORD REVERSALS.

"Reverse (that is, read backwards) a mechanical power and have a feast. Reverse one who is diseased and have to resist. Reverse an evil one and have resided. Reverse attraction and have a meadow. Reverse a falsifier and have a banister. Reverse a measure and have an opening. Reverse a disposition and have a destiny."

Everybody found these words without much difficulty.

WEIGHING THE FRUIT.

"We were weighing some of the fruit from our garden, and found that the apples, pears, and plums exactly balanced one another, as shown in my sketch. Can you say how many plums were equal in weight to one pear? The relative sizes of the fruits in my drawing must not be taken to be of necessity correct."

"I should call these kindergarten equations," said Marchant.

It certainly appeared to be an excellent method of introducing the elements of algebra to the untutored mind. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Marchant found the solution, and was surprised when told that she had done so purely by methods of algebra, though that was a subject with which she was in no way acquainted.

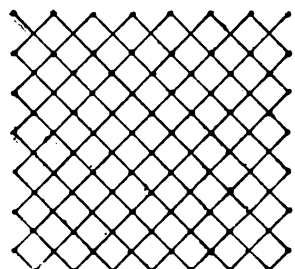
It is clear from Aunt Betty's sketch that three apples and one pear are equal in weight to ten plums, and that one apple and six plums weigh the same as a single pear. But how many plums alone would balance that pear? As we are warned, the fruit is evidently drawn out of proportion intentionally to deceive the eye.

PETER PARKER'S PIN PUZZLE.

"This puzzle was made by Peter Parker, a cobbler in a neighbouring village. You are required to place as many pins as possible, every one stuck into a different dot, so that no line shall have on it more than one pin."

"It seems," said Marchant, "that every dot stands on two lines, except the four corner ones, which only stand on one."

This was the last puzzle which they attacked that evening, and it kept them amused for a considerable



time. They kept getting more and more pins in, until suddenly the key to the solution flashed upon Uncle Dick, and he showed them what he was convinced was the maximum. And he was perfectly right. Next day they were quite proud to find that they had successfully mastered all but a few of Aunt Betty's puzzles.

(The solutions to the above puzzles will appear in the next issue of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.)

PERPLEXITIES.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

380.—CHANGING PLACES.

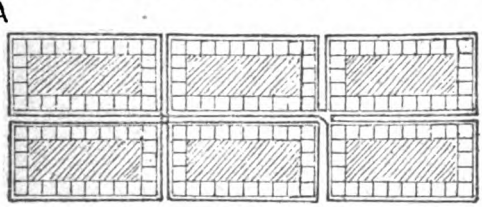
PLAY as follows: 2—11, 15—8, 11—4, 16—15, 1—9, 15—7, 9—13, 8—2, 13—16, 7—5, 16—15, 5—1, 4—6, 1—9, 15—16, 9—1, 6—15. Seventeen moves.

381.—A DREAMLAND CLOCK.

THE hour indicated would be exactly 23 and 1-13 minutes after 4 o'clock. But as the minute-hand moved in the opposite direction, the real time would be 36 and 12-13 minutes after 4. You must deduct the number of minutes indicated from 60 to get the real time.

382.—THE POSTWOMAN'S PUZZLE.

THE thick line shows the best route. Where the



lines cross go straight on as far as you can: do not turn. The distance round the six blocks is 1,800 yards. To go round all the blocks and return to A you must clearly cross the street at least six times. As a matter of fact seven crossings are necessary, and one of these is a diagonal crossing—a little more than 14 yards. Therefore the route is the sum of 1,800 yards, 60 yards (for six crossings), and 14 yards (for the diagonal crossing), making a little more than 1,874 yards in all.

383.—SHARING THEIR POCKET-MONEY.

EVERY boy at the start possessed 3d., and he gave ½d. to every girl; and every girl held 9d., of which she gave ¾d. to every boy. Then every child would have 4½d.

384.—A CHARADE.

PINCH-BECK.

[Many correspondents, who have written from time to time inquiring as to a republication of "Perplexities," are informed that a large selection of the puzzles, with fuller solutions and new matter, will be found in a book recently issued, "Amusements in Mathematics," by Henry E. Dudeney (Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 3s. 6d.).]

ACROSTICS.

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW SERIES.

PRIZES to the value of twelve guineas are offered for the solution of the six acrostics of the series now beginning.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 37.

Not bad is first, all chance is last;
May all your days with whole be passed.

1. Flies o'er the wave, gets cheated anywhere.
2. Slanting, or would be so if tail were there.
3. 'Twill greet its altered topic with a wink.
4. When thus, men are disorderly, I think.

QUÆSTOR.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 38.

Solve now the former, see it here;
Next month the latter will appear.

1. Weapons of many kinds we view,
   The ordinary man has two.
2. Again, and yet again, the bird
   Repeats itself, the same old word.
3. A dance where cotton may be found,
   A dance that makes the world go round.
4. Too much would be too much, and so
   The last two letters have to go.
5. Lavender water may be meant;
   It almost seems as though 'twere sent.
6. A journey starts you on your quest:
   From Egypt travel to the West.
7. Two prepositions may be one;
   Intoxication is begun.
8. When gold, it suits the royal head;
   When silver, may be cash instead.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostics 37 *and* 38 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on December* 10*th.*

The answer to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper, and each must be signed with the solver's pseudonym. Two answers may be sent to any or every light.

ANSWER TO No. 36.

1. S	ingleto	N
2. O	thell	O
3. U	ce	R
4. T	o	T
5. H	ania	H
6. W	ido	W
7. A	steri	A
8. R	ive	R
9. D	ivi	D
10. S	tave	S

NOTES.—Light 1. Leading a singleton, at bridge; a single ton. 3. Dan Chaucer; "Dan" is an anagram of "and." 4. Tot. anything little; French, *t* soon. 5. Mazeppa, Zep, Zephaniah. 7. Soled, Delos. 8. Rivers Don, Orange, Eden, Tweed. 9. Dividend. 10. St. Ives.

Simplicity of Dress in War-time

How to make the best of it.

By Mary O. Kennedy.

MISS IDA ADAMS.

This little day-frock, worn in "Inside the Lines," is nun-like in its severity, but it has a touch of greatness, as all artistically-simple frocks have nowadays. *Photo.* [*Lallie Charles.*

Photo.] MISS JULIA JAMES. [Lallie Charles.

THREE years of war have produced the most astonishing change. Englishwomen to-day are better dressed than they have been for many years, because they have gone back to their own type. They buy beautiful clothes of austere cut, and look better and, in the case of elderly women, younger than they have done for years.

The psychological influences have been with some women even stronger than the problems of cost and the difficulties in getting fabrics and colours. Display at a time when those nearest and dearest to them were facing danger at the Front was not decent, and by an unwritten law it was made taboo. Only the wrong people dressed with anything like the pre-war ostentation. Those who were guilty of this offence branded themselves as doing no war-work and as having no one out at the Front—both of which, when the best men of the nation were fighting and the best women working, were enough to mark the offender as outside the pale.

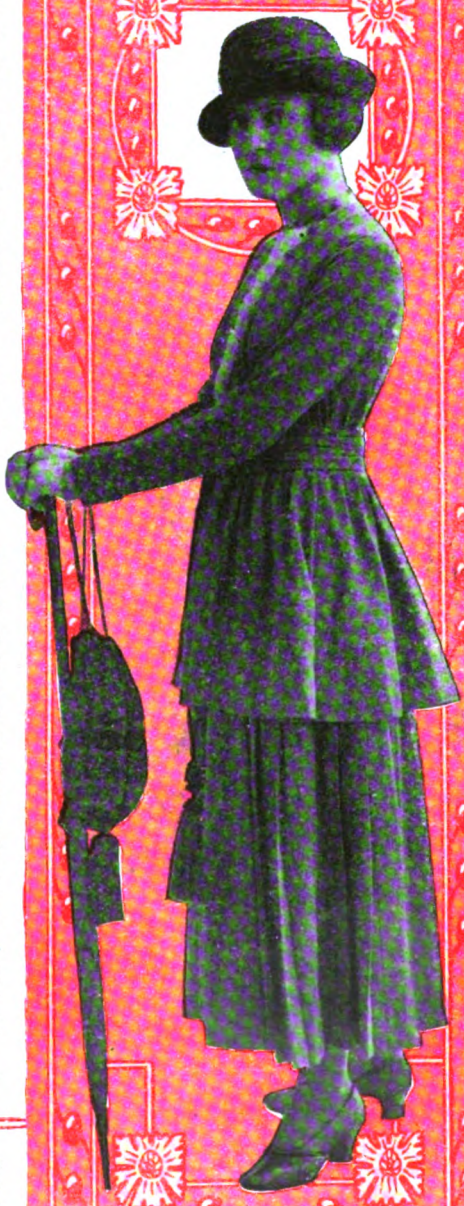
The wide short skirt was the first change in dress that the war brought. At first it was both praised and blamed—blamed because it was a change, and praised because it was release from the tight skirt. Presently it lost its flare at the hem and acquired its straight up-and-down look in coat-frock and costume. Then it lengthened and became as it is to-day, the most delightful and feminine silhouette within living

This is a simple design, yet, carried out in gold lace over vine colourings, with ounches of purple velvet grapes, it looks strangely beautiful in "Theodore & Co."

memory. The coat-frock, the most useful fashion ever invented, is distinctly a result of the war. It has gone through certain changes since its universal adoption. Recently it has fastened itself at the back and altered its ceinture from a belt to a sash of the fabric, loosely knotted at the back lower than the waistline. There is a certain elasticity in its very latest models; without making their predecessors look out of date, they have acquired a little of the cinema-cowboy look—perhaps from the joint influence of the lady groom and the debonair land woman. This in its out-of-doors mood only; within doors it has a gracious undated style that might be a mixture of the feminine fashions of the Directoire combined with a "sit-for-your-portrait-to-Romney" look.

Simplicity is just as insistent in millinery. The large or small velours hat is paramount, and second to it are simple fabric hats, dependent for their attractiveness on their line alone, trimming being of the most meagre description. But because millinery is designed on austere lines, this does not mean that the business of choosing it does not require care. There never was a time when a silhouette was more dependent on good taste for its best results. As one or two hats now do the business of half-a-dozen in pre-war times, their relation to the costume with which they are destined to be worn must be very carefully considered, as well as the complexion and shape of the wearer's face.

A *motif* or bead girdle wrongly



This outdoor frock of beige stockinette has everything to commend it. The oriental-coloured bag has a tassel repeating the simple note of the belt.

Photo.] MISS IDA ADAMS [*Lallie Charles.*

MISS DAVIES.

Photo. Lallie Charles.

A multi-coloured Indian Paisley shawl made this lovely coat. It is faced back with mole duvetyn and held with heavy froggings. The hat is also part of the shawl and keeps its note of colouring.

artist-milliner. The most popular of the better-class trimmings have been designed with the simplest of ingredients. Wool and beads are the basis, and, though perhaps the cheapest media, offer practically an unlimited variety of treatment and colour-schemes, and some of the distinctive results achieved in English workrooms have found favour in exclusive French millinery houses.

Next in importance to the choice and placing of the meagre trimming is the arrangement of the veil. It must not compete with the chosen can, on a hat, mar the most beautifully-designed gown. A *motif* that has a repoussé effect when a flat design is needed is often fatal. Whistler's butterfly was never more carefully balanced into position than some of the new *motifs* in the hands of the

This beautiful frock of tomato-red chiffon has an over-dress of silver lace and a bodice embroidered in oriental colourings. The mask is of black lace.

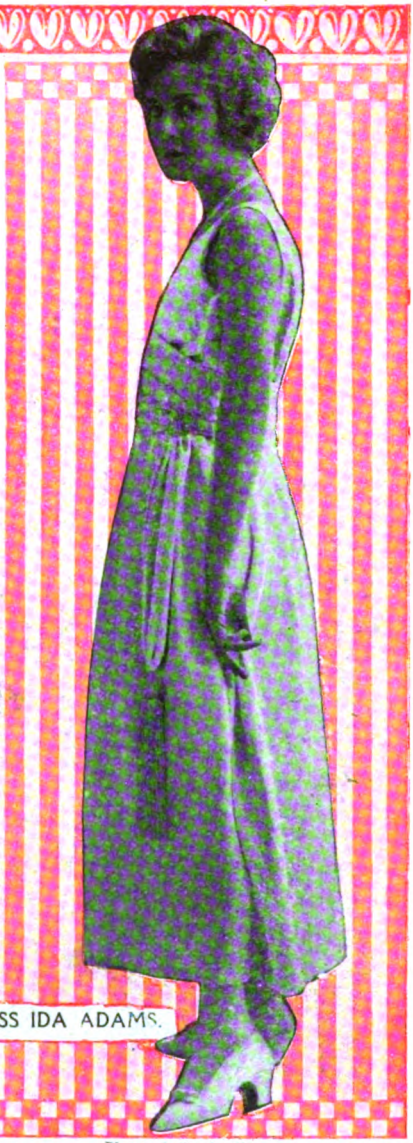
Photo. Hana.

MISS I. SHILLING.

t imming unless it forms part of it, and it must be arranged so that it presents no untidy line or straggling ends. Some of the handsome lace veils worn with small hats are their sole trimming, and can be tied on the untrimmed shape. Hat-pins, too, can do "their bit" in the scheme of the perfect silhouette; they must either efface themselves entirely or else be a prominent feature of the scheme.

A coat that will do for day or evening is an asset. This is fashioned with a huge flounce and deep collar and cuffs of mole velvet and completed with mole and gold shot tissue.

MISS DAVIES.

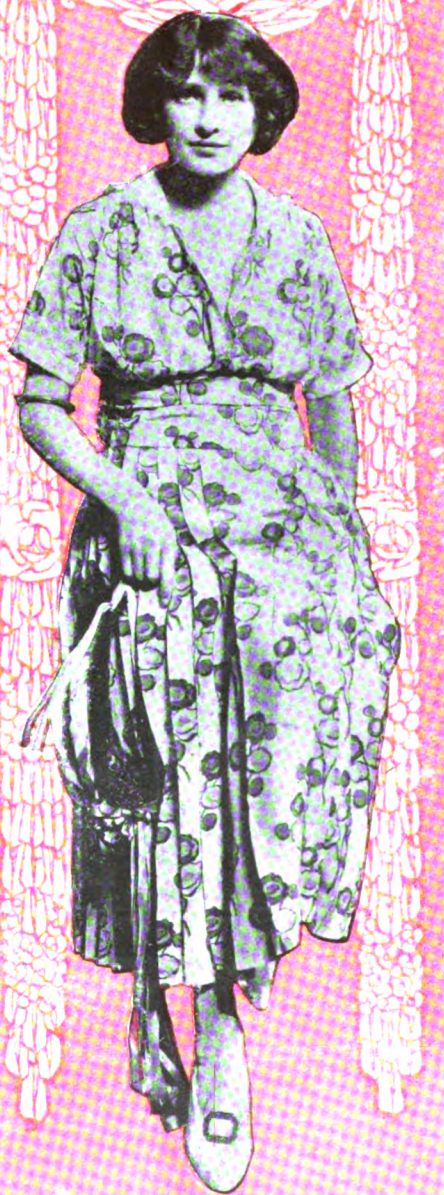


MISS IDA ADAMS.

Photos. Lallie Charles.

Greek in its purity, though modern in its line, is this severely beautiful gown of white satin with its swathed sash and diamante brooch-buckle and tassel.

An interesting incident in war fashions has been the appearance in considerable numbers in the cities, and London in particular, of a type of girl who recalls both Helleu's innocent beauties and the more sophisticated type created by Kirchner. They bear on



their pretty shoulders the burden of many of the charges of extravagance which are occasionally indiscriminately levelled at the whole of the feminine world. They are always busy copying and imitating some stage idol, and, balanced on high heels, strutting and preening through the streets at all hours of the day and evening, they are a curious "back-wash" of the war. Their frocks have usually come from some of the little mushroom shops that have sprung up since the war in all the side streets from Petticoat Lane to Piccadilly. These pretty Helleu-Kirchner girls no more represent the typical Englishwoman than the little shops from which they buy their fashions are typical of English trade. Recently there have been signs that the influence of the steadily-growing mass of women in uniform is having its effect on them, and as their place in a war-world becomes more and more anomalous some of their number drop out to join the ranks of the workers who matter.

The theatres have been a good deal influenced by the general tendency to quiet dressing, with perhaps the exception of those devoted to spectacular productions. Many managers since the war have had the dresses of the leading ladies made by firms famous for their success with the simplest and most severe forms of dress. Instead of exaggeration, the suggestion coming across from the footlights to the audience is the salutary one of the possibilities of making dress, as it

A little afternoon frock in flowered silk, worn in "Billeted," shows how very meagre trimmings on a "little" frock should be to give a coyly youthful look.

Photo.] MISS IRIS HOEY. [Poulsham & Banfield.

should be, subservient to the personality of the wearer and not turning women into a regiment of mannequins.

When the little adjuncts to simplicity—the proper way to carry a bag or an umbrella, the correct minimum of jewellery, the way to wear a fur, the angle at which a hat should be pinned—are demonstrated on the stage there is often a good deal to be learned from the theatre in war-time. But for those who have the privilege to go behind the scenes there is even more. The principals take great care of their clothes, to make them last and save redressing as far as possible. They know that the average cost of redressing a piece is fifty per cent. as much again as it used to be in peace-time. The attendant dressers mend and clean more carefully than they have ever done before, and dresses worn in scenes where there is much wear and tear on the dress are mended immediately after the scene in which they are used. With dancing shoes the same thing happens. A *prima ballerina* was boasting quite recently of the fact that she had made a pair of shoes, which in former days would have been discarded after three wears, last sixty-five times.

There is only one universal extravagance—the craze for silk lingerie. However, as silk is easier to wash and lasts a considerable time, it is perhaps not so heinous an offence to buy it.

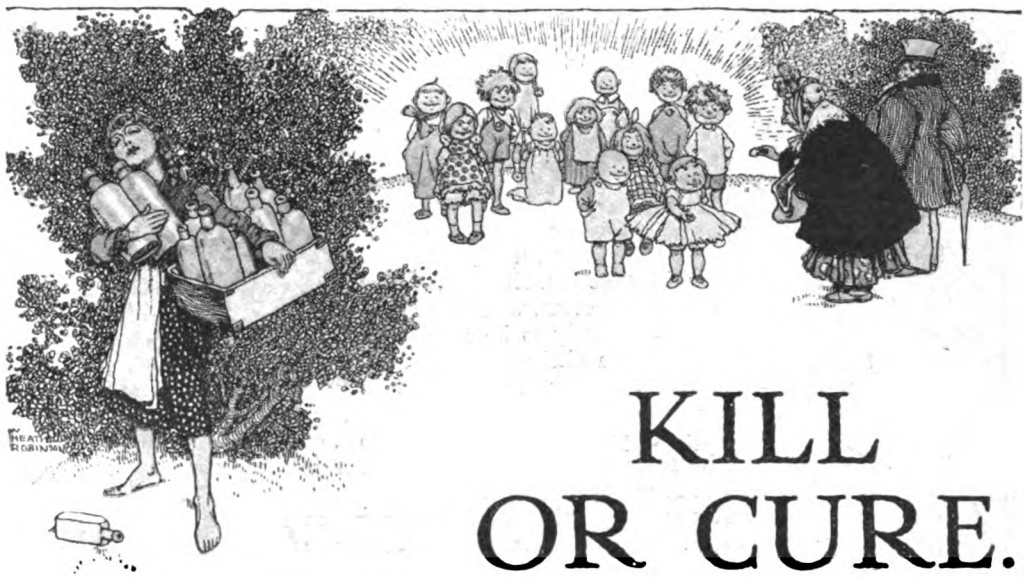
We are indebted to Messrs. Reville & Rossiter, of Hanover Square, W., for the photographs of Miss Davies, whose dresses, and also those worn by Miss Ida Adams, were designed by Mr. Reville; while "Esther," 5, Grafton Street, W., is responsible for those worn by Miss Iris Hoey.

A simple frock of white crêpe de Chine; the sash and tasselled cord under the white satin collar are brightened with sealing-wax red.

Photo. MISS IRIS HOEY. [*Fordham & Banfield.*

MISS JULIA JAMES.
An old-world look but a modern frock of brocade. The fabric is used with discretion, the sash being also the bodice!

Photo] [Lallie Charles.



KILL OR CURE.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES.

By LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson.

SEMOLINA was the eldest of a very large, and a very poor, family. It was poor because of its size—its numbers, that is to say—having far too many mouths for the food to go round into. And the larger it grew the poorer it became; there seemed no help for it.

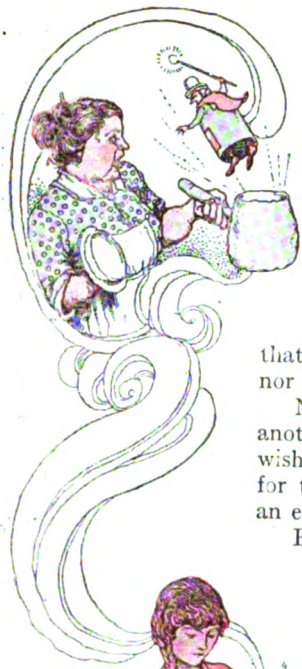
Year by year babies kept coming, though Semolina did everything she could to warn them away. Whenever she heard that her mother was expecting one (and the notice she got of it was generally rather short) she would write out a poster in large copybook hand and pin it up on the front door. "House full"; "No room"; "Gone away"; "No more babies wanted," were some of the devices by which she tried to avert the dreaded visitation.

But it was no good; sometimes, as a result, instead of one baby they got twins and so became poorer than ever, and at a faster rate. In thus trying to avoid a large family Semolina was different from her parents, who took everything just as it came and never troubled to look ahead or make plans any farther than for the day itself. "Trouble is sure to come," said her mother; "why look for it?" And so the larger the family grew the nearer it came to starvation.

The carelessness of her parents had been Semolina's greatest misfortune from her birth, though it had also brought her one bit of luck. For Semolina had a fairy godmother. This had come about in the following circumstances. Shortly after Semolina's birth her mother, meaning to warm up some milk just before going to bed, had gone to put a pot on the fire; and fetching it from the larder she had put on the wrong one—an empty one, in which (finding that it was empty) a certain fairy sanitary inspector had taken up her quarters for the night.

When the fairy, awakened by the heat, began screaming and knocking at the closed lid, Semolina's mother took off the pot, raised the cover, and let out the fairy.

In gratitude for this service, though also rather in a temper, the fairy had waved her wand over the sleeping infant. "Your child, woman," said she, "shall be more careful than you have been—that, at least, I will see to; yes, much more careful!" And



"SEMOLINA'S MOTHER RAISED THE COVER AND LET OUT THE FAIRY."

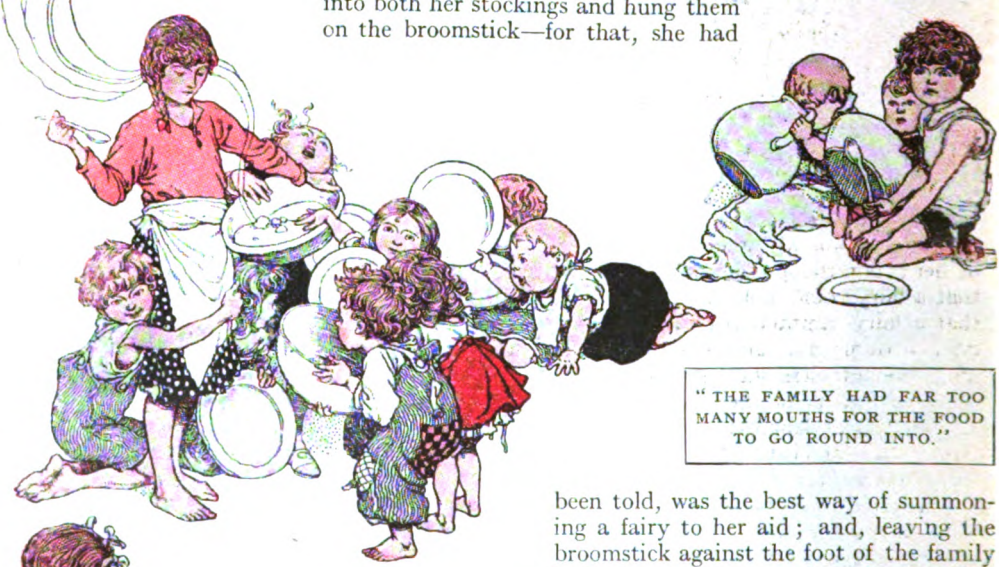
having thus bestowed her dubious gift she vanished, and had never been seen again.

But carefulness had ever since remained Semolina's besetting characteristic; not that her mother valued it in the least, or made any conscious use of it; nor did it bring Semolina happiness. Still, there it was; and now and again Semolina's care had averted household catastrophes. But it had not prevented the family from growing larger.

Everybody knew that Semolina had started life with the advantage of a fairy godmother; but her parents had changed house so often, without letting landlords or tradespeople know, that it was scarcely to be wondered at if they had lost connection; nor did it seem likely that it would ever be re-established.

Nevertheless, in the twelfth year of her age, and in view of yet another expected baby, Semolina thought that she would try what wishing and praying might do. So she began wishing from day to day for the fairy to return and provide her with some means for putting an end to the family increase.

Every night when Semolina went to bed she breathed a wish into both her stockings and hung them on the broomstick—for that, she had



"THE FAMILY HAD FAR TOO MANY MOUTHS FOR THE FOOD TO GO ROUND INTO."

been told, was the best way of summoning a fairy to her aid; and, leaving the broomstick against the foot of the family bed, she would go to sleep, hoping that somehow before morning a way to the fulfilment of her wish would be revealed.

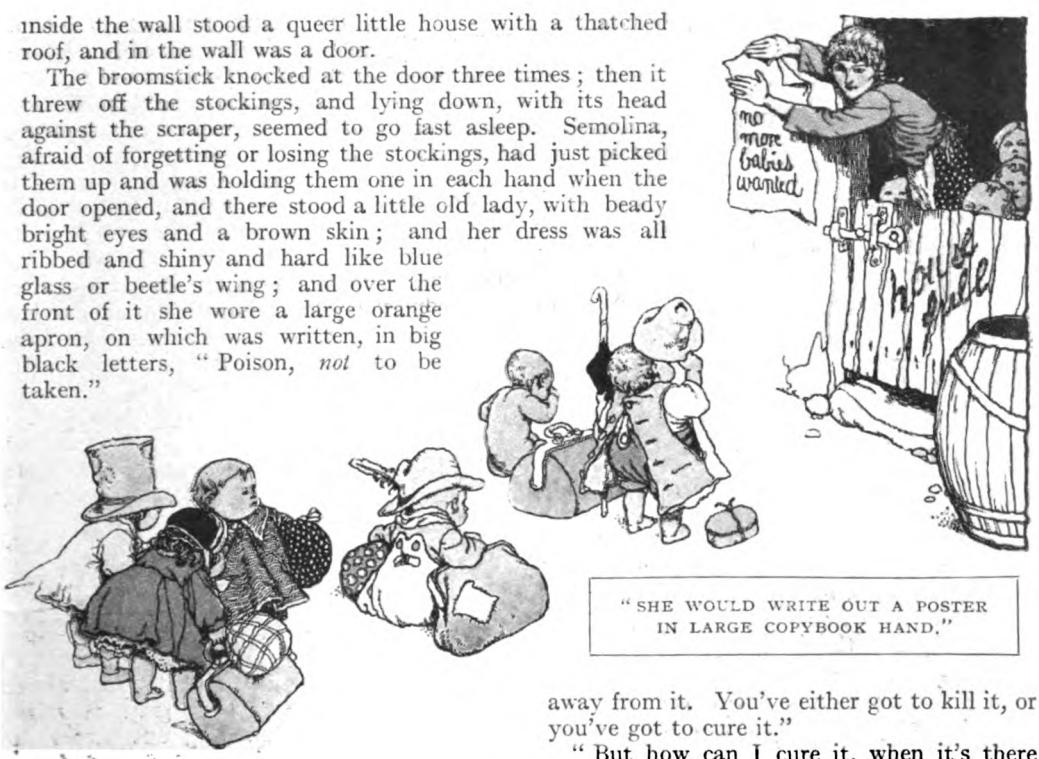
With her mind thus preoccupied she slept lightly, and one night was awakened by the broomstick tapping softly against the bed-rail. Semolina sat up all expectation; and up got the leaning broomstick and began hopping towards the door. Semolina got up, too, and climbed across a sleeping row of her brothers and sisters to follow the broomstick's leading. Hop, hop, hop, down the stairs ever so lightly went the broomstick, and Semolina went after.

Outside was beautiful moonlight that each moment seemed to grow brighter; and away over by-road and field-path went the broomstick, with Semolina's two stockings dangling from its shoulders, and Semolina following after.

Presently they came to a rough clearing on the skirts of a wood, and a little later, inside the wood, they came to a high wall; and

inside the wall stood a queer little house with a thatched roof, and in the wall was a door.

The broomstick knocked at the door three times; then it threw off the stockings, and lying down, with its head against the scraper, seemed to go fast asleep. Semolina, afraid of forgetting or losing the stockings, had just picked them up and was holding them one in each hand when the door opened, and there stood a little old lady, with beady bright eyes and a brown skin; and her dress was all ribbed and shiny and hard like blue glass or beetle's wing; and over the front of it she wore a large orange apron, on which was written, in big black letters, "Poison, *not* to be taken."



"SHE WOULD WRITE OUT A POSTER IN LARGE COPYBOOK HAND."

Semolina was all taken aback at the sight of her; but though she had never imagined that a fairy could look like this (not realizing that a fairy sanitary inspector was bound to be something of a caution as regards appearance), nevertheless she felt now that a living specimen was before her.

"Well, god-daughter, so you've come at last!" said the bottle-like fairy. "And what can I do for you?"

This gave Semolina a still greater surprise; not only was the old lady a fairy, but she was the right one—the one of all others whom Semolina wished to see. So, holding the two empty stockings in her hands, she stated her errand, and then stood waiting for instruction.

"Too large a family, eh?" said the old lady. "Want to be rid of it? Easy enough. You've only got to run away."

"Oh, but I can't!" said Semolina. "You see, I'm one of them; and I have my father and mother to look after as well as all the others. And, however much I ran away, the family would still be there, getting larger and larger, and poorer and poorer. It's *that* I mind about."

"Getting poorer?" queried the fairy. "Well, a large family *is* a large family; and if you must stick to it, there's no getting away from it. You've either got to kill it, or you've got to cure it."

"But how can I cure it, when it's there already?" inquired Semolina.

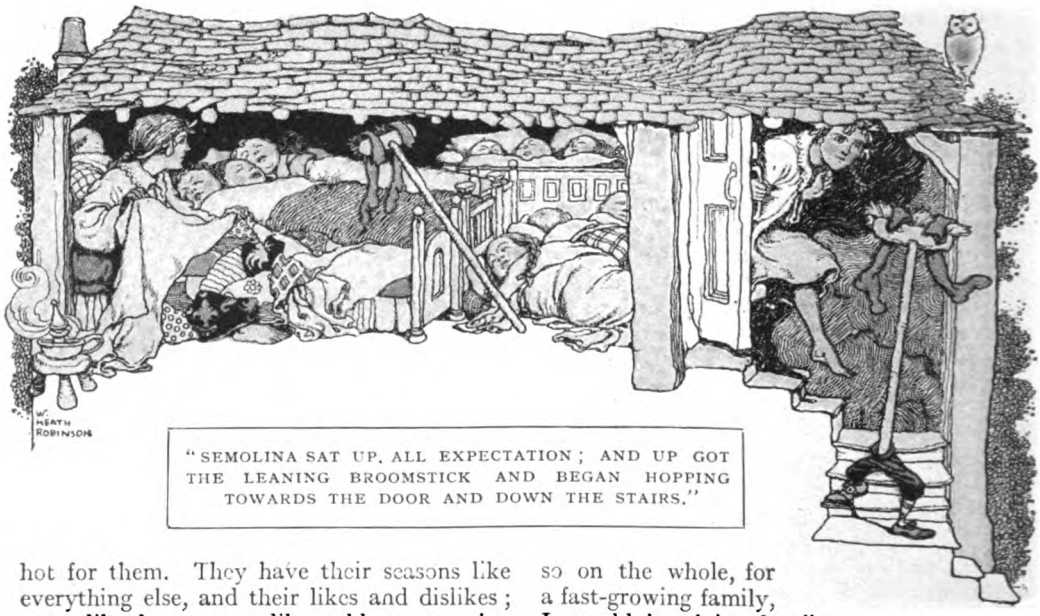
"You can," said the fairy; "but come first and see whether killing doesn't attract you. Then, if you think curing is any better, I'll give you a cure."

The fairy led the way through the house into a small garden, thickly planted with the most extraordinary-looking growths that Semolina had ever set eyes on. They were none of them exactly beautiful; but they grew with quite amazing vigour and profusion, seeming to enjoy life in their own way tremendously.

"There's a picture for you!" said the fairy. "Aren't they just killing?" Evidently she was very proud of them.

"But what in the world are they?" inquired Semolina.

"They are the diseases," replied the fairy. "Some came from the garden of Æsculapius, my great-great-grandfather, but they have been considerably added to since his day. There," she went on, "you have all the illnesses that people can die of. Making cures for them, you see, I have to grow the things themselves. And they are very interesting, I assure you; some of them I make real pets of. Those double pneumonias"—she pointed to a bed as she spoke—"have been quite beautiful; but the weather is getting too



"SEMOLINA SAT UP, ALL EXPECTATION; AND UP GOT THE LEANING BROOMSTICK AND BEGAN HOPPING TOWARDS THE DOOR AND DOWN THE STAIRS."

hot for them. They have their seasons like everything else, and their likes and dislikes; some like heat, some like cold, some enjoy the wet, some the dry; some are perennials, some are only annuals, growing splendidly for a short time, and then almost dying out. Now, I dare say you hadn't an idea what diseases looked like in their actual growth before people took to them?"

"That I never did!" said Semolina.

"Well, come and have a look at them! Only be sure you keep to the path, and quite close to me; some of them are rather catching."

Semolina attached herself as closely as she could to the blue-bottle fairy; and together they went down the path with all the diseases growing in beds to right and to left of them.

"Those," said the fairy, stopping to point, "are lumbagos and sciaticas; they are not much to look at just now, but there'll be more of them later on. Bronchials also do better in the winter; but that's a fine anthrax growing over there, and up there on that wall is a splendid angina pectoris.

"Now, if it's children you want to get rid of," the fairy went on, "here's a nice healthy row of scarlatinas just out. Children take to them easily; or there's a diphtheria if you prefer it."

"And what's that?" inquired Semolina, pointing to a large black-and-tan flower, of somewhat similar shape to the dog-tooth violet.

"That is a hydrophobia," said the fairy. "Take care; it has a poisonous bark that bites if you touch it. It's a lively thing of its kind, but it takes about two years to establish; so on the whole, for a fast-growing family, I wouldn't advise that."

"Oh, I don't want it," replied Semolina; "I was only just looking at it. And what's that?" She pointed to a grey, moss-like growth which was straying out across the path.

"That's creeping paralysis," said the fairy; "good for old people, or for anyone you want to keep out of mischief, but it doesn't often come in the way of children."

"Oh, it isn't the *children* who are mischievous—not at our home," said Semolina; "it's——" And then she stopped speaking, but went on thinking.

Meanwhile the old fairy continued the conversation, pointing to right and left as she went. "That's elephantiasis; it grows all over the place, and there's no stopping it, but you can live with it for ever. Neuralgias are much the same, so far as living with them is concerned, but they are a jumpy sort of growth, and you never know where you mayn't have them next. Those carbuncles are big, fine things, but they're only troublesome, and don't kill people; and polypuses are much the same. Dropsies and palsies are good for bedding-out purposes; but you don't get on fast with them. I've got a large variety of hysterias—that nostalgia is one of them, Home-sweet-home is another name for it, but that would hardly suit you—or would it? If you want to make anyone home-sick, there you are!"

"I'll see," said Semolina; she was still thinking "And now, please, as you've shown me the kills, may I see some of the cures?"

"You must come into the house to see them," said her godmother; "they are in bottles. But really I'm not sure that I've got anything warranted to cure a large family; I've never been asked for such a thing before. Let me see!"

She led the way into the house; and there on a shelf Semolina saw rows and rows of bottles of various colours and sizes, and each one bearing a different name. The Fairy ran her finger along the descriptions upon the labels. Presently she paused.

"Here is one, now, called 'Glob'; it comes from America, and is said to cure everything. If that is true (I haven't tried it myself except for toothache, and it cured that, it drew the tooth right out), well, if it's true it ought to be able to cure a large family. Would you like to try it?"

Semolina thought she would.

"And in case it fails, you might take one of the other things—one of the kills, I mean—to fall back on."

Semolina was a little doubtful about that, but finally decided to take a nostalgia—mainly because its other name, Home-sweet-home, rather pleased her.

So the fairy filled her two stockings for her, one with kill and the other with cure. Into the one she put a root of nostalgia, and into the other a large bottle of "Glob."

"Only take care not to break the bottle," she remarked, "or you'll be done for; and remember that if you apply the nostalgia upside down it'll have quite an opposite effect. There are two sorts of home-sickness, you know—one makes people want to be at home, and the other makes them want to leave it."

Semolina nodded, looking at the fairy with wise eyes. Then, having thanked her, and carrying a full stocking in each hand, she went to rejoin the broomstick, and off they started for home again.

Before they had gone far Semolina was quite overcome with curiosity, she was dying to test the virtue of her two acquisitions. And thought she to herself, "As I have got the cure by me, it can do no harm if I just try a little bit of the kill."

So, sitting down by the wayside, she turned out the contents of her two stockings: the root of nostalgia, and the bottle of "Glob," warranted to cure everything. Then she took the nostalgia root and, holding it right way up, gave herself a little rub with it.

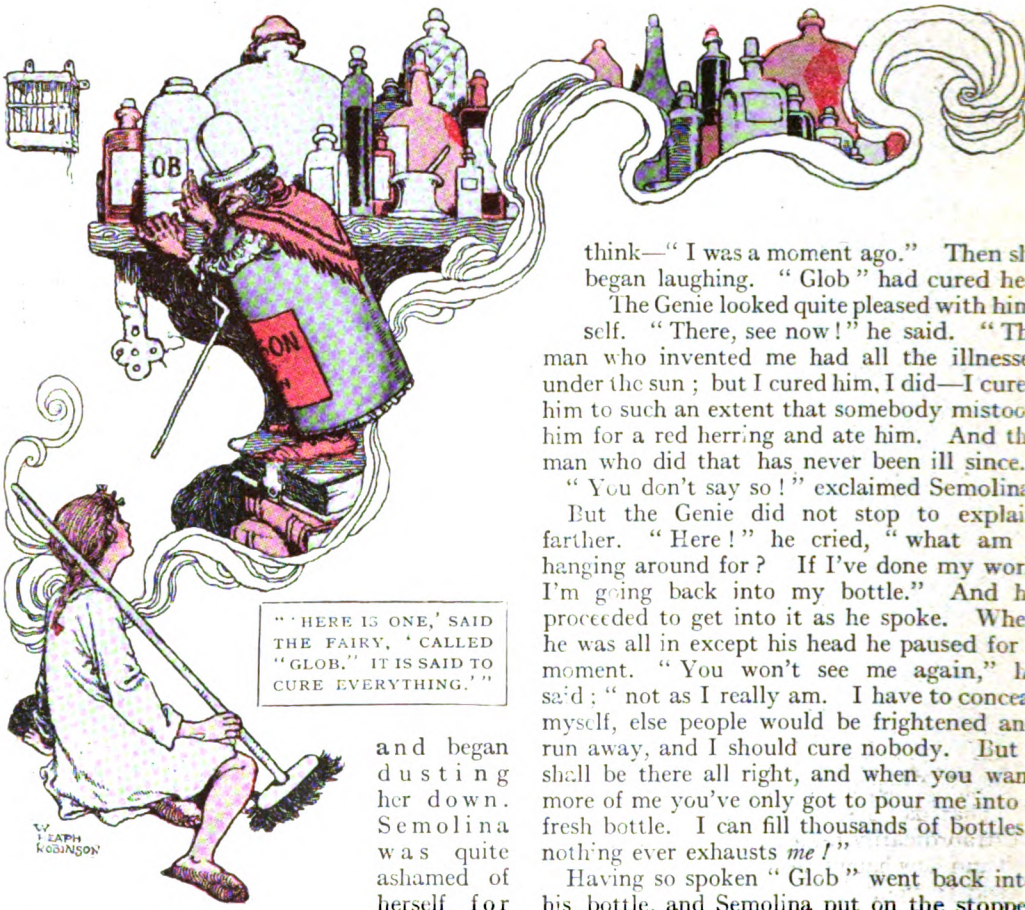
Hardly had she done so when she felt a terrible pain in her heart, and began to cry. "Oh, I do so want to go home! I do so want to go home!" she kept saying. "Oh, I'm so miserable; if I don't get home I shall die!"

The suddenness and the severity of the symptoms quite frightened her; so in great haste she took up the bottle of "Glob" and drew out the stopper.

Scarcely had she done so when there exuded from it a large Genie, with oily locks, a shiny skin, and a very pungent odour. His complexion was a bright copper, and his mouth when he opened it contained a strong American accent.

Semolina fell flat with astonishment; but the Genie, in the most helpful way possible, immediately picked her up

"AWAY WENT THE BROOMSTICK, WITH SEMOLINA'S TWO STOCKINGS DANGLING FROM ITS SHOULDERS, AND SEMOLINA FOLLOWING AFTER TILL THEY CAME TO A QUEER LITTLE HOUSE."



"'HERE IS ONE,' SAID THE FAIRY, 'CALLED "GLOB." IT IS SAID TO CURE EVERYTHING.'"

and began dusting her down. Semolina was quite ashamed of herself for having been so startled; he was evidently a very kind person.

"You are very good!" she said, compunctiously, when he had done.

"Good?" commented the Genie. "Well, I reckon you are about right there. I'm as good as gold, and I go a darned sight farther. There isn't any corner in the world I can't get round. The sovereign remedy 'Glob' cures everything."

He began rubbing himself all over her as he spoke, covering her with grease and smell.

"Whatever *are* you doing?" cried Semolina, a little hurt in her dignity by this summary proceeding.

"Well, I suppose you've got something the matter with you," said the Genie; "else why did you take my top off?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Semolina. "I'm very unhappy, I'm the most miserable person in the world. At least"—and she stopped to think—"I was a moment ago." Then she began laughing. "Glob" had cured her.

The Genie looked quite pleased with himself. "There, see now!" he said. "The man who invented me had all the illnesses under the sun; but I cured him, I did—I cured him to such an extent that somebody mistook him for a red herring and ate him. And the man who did that has never been ill since."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Semolina.

But the Genie did not stop to explain farther. "Here!" he cried, "what am I hanging around for? If I've done my work I'm going back into my bottle." And he proceeded to get into it as he spoke. When he was all in except his head he paused for a moment. "You won't see me again," he said; "not as I really am. I have to conceal myself, else people would be frightened and run away, and I should cure nobody. But I shall be there all right, and when you want more of me you've only got to pour me into a fresh bottle. I can fill thousands of bottles; nothing ever exhausts *me!*"

Having so spoken "Glob" went back into his bottle, and Semolina put on the stopper and carried him home with her.

When she got there it was only just beginning to be light, and her father and mother were still in bed and asleep. So were all the children; but Semolina did not allow that to continue. One by one she got them all out of bed, opened her bottle, took out "Glob," and, treating each one in turn, rubbed him all over them from head to foot.

"Glob" had now taken on a new form, as he had warned her; he was no longer a Genie, but simply a thick brown liquid of an oily consistency, which you poured into the palm of your hand and then rubbed with. But his smell was exactly the same as ever; he smelt horrid, but healthy.

Semolina picked out one of her small brothers and began rubbing him with "Glob." She rubbed him all over from head to foot, and the small brother took it meekly, saying no word; for his eldest sister had long been a terror to him and one whose word was law.

Then she took one of her little sisters and began rubbing her.

"What's that for?" inquired the little sister; for girls are more inquisitive about things than boys, being more intelligent.

"It's to cure you," said Semolina.

"What of?"

"Cure you of being here at all."

"Why shouldn't I be here?" inquired the little sister, in injured tones.

"Law! don't ask such silly questions," retorted Semolina. "What use are you, now that you are here?" Having finished the rubbing she took on number three; and so she did with the whole twelve of them.

And when she had done she stood them in a row and looked at them, and they all shone like copper saucepans.

"Ah, you'll do nicely now!" said Semolina. "There, run out and play."

"Can't we have any breakfast?" inquired the children.

"There isn't any breakfast for you," said Semolina. "Haven't I cured you of asking for breakfast when there isn't any? You'd better all come and let me give you another rub."

But at that threat all the children ran off into the road and began playing; and there they ran up and down shining like copper saucepans. You never saw such a sight in all your life, except perhaps in a millionaire's family, or among the Red Indians.

That day everybody who went by stopped to look at them. "What extraordinarily healthy-looking children!" was the constant remark; "and how happy they seem! Your father and mother must be very good to you."

Some admired their happy and healthy looks so much that they gave them coppers—a thing they would never have done had they looked otherwise; so the children got their breakfast after all, buying it a pennyworth at a time, till by evening they were well fed and satisfied.

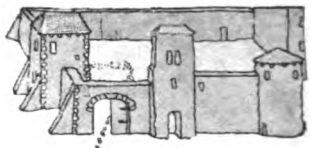
"SCARCELY HAD SHE DRAWN OUT THE STOPPER WHEN THERE EXUDED FROM THE BOTTLE A LARGE GENIE."

Semolina was satisfied also; she felt that she had done a good day's work; but her mother only said, "What have you been shining 'em like that for? Ridiculous, I call it; trying to make 'em look like the quality. But there was never any understanding *you*."

That night when Semolina put them to bed she gave her copper-saucepan family another rub over. Then she went out to beg of her neighbours as many empty bottles as they could spare. She got fifteen, three with cracks in them, but only seven with corks. These she brought home and washed carefully, corks as well. Then she poured "Glob" into them and, cutting the corks in two, corked fourteen of them. Then she put the fourteen bottles to stand in the window. Then she wrote out and stuck up over them a large label: "It's 'Glob' as does it," and the fifteenth uncorked bottle she put to stand by itself, labelled "Sample trials, free gratis for nothing." Then she went to bed happy.

The next morning she started business. She gave the children another polish and the remains of yesterday's breakfast, and turned them out to play in the road all shining like copper saucepans. And everybody who went by stopped to look at them, and then at the fourteen bottles in the window and the label bearing the words "It's 'Glob' as does it," and then at the sample bottle with its attractive offer of a free trial.

By the end of the day Semolina had almost emptied the sample bottle, and had sold the other fourteen for a penny each. That evening her mother



gave birth to triplets. Semolina gave the triplets and her mother a good rubbing with "Glob," settled them and the family comfortably down for the night, and then went off to beg more empty bottles from the neighbours. But the neighbours, who had heard all about what she was doing, now made her pay for them. She paid a penny each for twelve bottles; and so had only twopence left for the family to carry on with. This set her thinking; and, having thought, the next day she priced the bottles at twopence each instead of a penny, and, though the sample bottle was now empty, did a roaring trade—sold all twelve, that is to say. Before a week was out she was selling at sixpence, and the price of empty bottles supplied to her by neighbours had gone up to twopence.

This rise in the price of bottles puzzled her; but after again thinking she had a great idea. She put up a notice: "Everybody's to bring their own bottles." And the public responded to her demand, as though she had been a lord.

They brought very large bottles, it is true, but that did not matter to Semolina. "Glob's" supply never failed her; Semolina got her sixpence and was satisfied.

This went on till people who had come with small bottles complained of having to pay as much as people with large bottles; they wanted to have theirs filled at half-price. This, however, Semolina flatly refused; but after thinking once more she charged double price to the people who brought large bottles.

"SEMOLINA PUT UP A NOTICE: 'EVERYBODY'S TO BRING THEIR OWN BOTTLES,' AND THE PUBLIC RESPONDED, AS THOUGH SHE HAD BEEN A LORD."

Semolina's cares would now have been over but for one thing only. Her father and mother were not of a saving disposition, and all the money that Semolina earned by selling "Glob" they were immediately for spending. For a time Semolina did not like to deny them; but after awhile her mother's careless extravagance and her father's increasing habits caused her to revolt. She began to conceal what she earned, and every night, after they had gone to bed, she went out and buried quite half of it in a beautiful hole in the ground; and as time went on the hole got fuller and fuller, and Semolina (careful soul!) more secretive about the steady increase of her takings.

Presently when trade had apparently ceased to roar Semolina's father became discontented. He could not think why it was that Semolina, who had started so well, was now doing such small business—only just enough, in fact, to keep the house going.

"It isn't right," he said, and he said it more especially when his daughter Semolina had no money for him to take to the public-house of an evening. "Semolina, it isn't right, it isn't respectful. You don't treat me as a father had ought to be treated."

"Why, I'm always treating you!" exclaimed Semolina, highly indignant at this proof of parental ingratitude.

"Oh, you are, are you, you bottle-nosed imp!" (This because at that moment Semolina, with head close down, was carefully decanting some more of her precious "Glob" into empty bottles.) "There, get along with you, I'm sick of it all!" And so saying he gave her a rough push, and the bottle flew out of her hands and was smashed to atoms.

"There! now you've done it!" cried Semolina, hastily; but for the moment she said no more. For up from the glass-wreckage rose the Genie, full of fury and terrible of aspect, and the smell of him was enough to knock you down.

"That cures me of staying here any more!" cried the Genie, shaking his fist at the terrified father; and, dealing him a parting kick in the paunch, he went up through the ceiling and disappeared.

Semolina's father fainted right off. There at her feet, with rolled-up eyes, he lay helpless.

"Well, I suppose I've got to recover him somehow," said his daughter to herself. Then she bethought her, and, running to the place where she had hidden it, fetched out the nostalgia-root and turning it upside down began vigorously to rub the face and hands of her unconscious parent.

In a short time his senses returned to him and he sat up. "I'm sick of this!" he said. "Sick of everything, sick of the very sight of you!"

He stumbled to his feet; then catching sight of the broken bottle he remembered, and looked apprehensively about him.

But though the Genie was gone, the terror of him remained: and the man lurched hastily to the door.

"That cures me of staying here any more!" he remarked. "Home, sweet home—I *don't* think!" And so saying out he went and disappeared down the road.

"Well, I suppose it's a good riddance," said Semolina, and then she sat down and began to cry.

Presently her mother came in.

"What are you crying for?" she asked.

"Father's finished off the 'Glob' bottle; there isn't any more of it left"

"What! Drunk it?"

"I wish he had!" said Semolina, struck by an afterthought. "That 'ud have cured him."

"What of?"

"Everything."

"Where is your father now?"

"Singing 'Home, Sweet Home,' down at the public-house, I shouldn't wonder," replied Semolina. "But he's all right; he won't come home any more. I gave him such a rubbing into he'll never get cured of that!"

"What are you talking about?" inquired her mother.

But Semolina was following her own thoughts and paid no attention.

"Anyway, we've enough to go on with," she remarked, "if we are only careful. And now father's gone, don't you go having any more babies—we've got enough of 'em."

"Why, what do you take me for?" exclaimed the other, indignantly.

"You are so careless, mother!" said Semolina, apologetically; and then her mother laughed.

"You are a perfect cure, you are!" she said then.

"I believe I am," said Semolina.

A few days later her fairy godmother popped her head in at the door. "Well, how are you getting on?" she inquired.

"Nicely, thank you," said Semolina. "Father got home-sick and went away. We are all right now."

"But you've still got your mother with you," remarked the fairy.

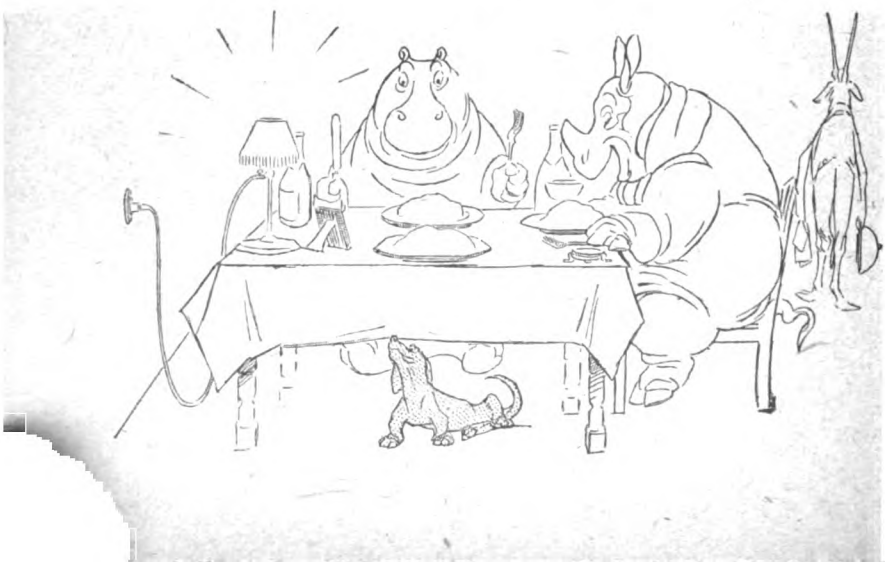
"Oh, I can manage mother!" said Semolina.

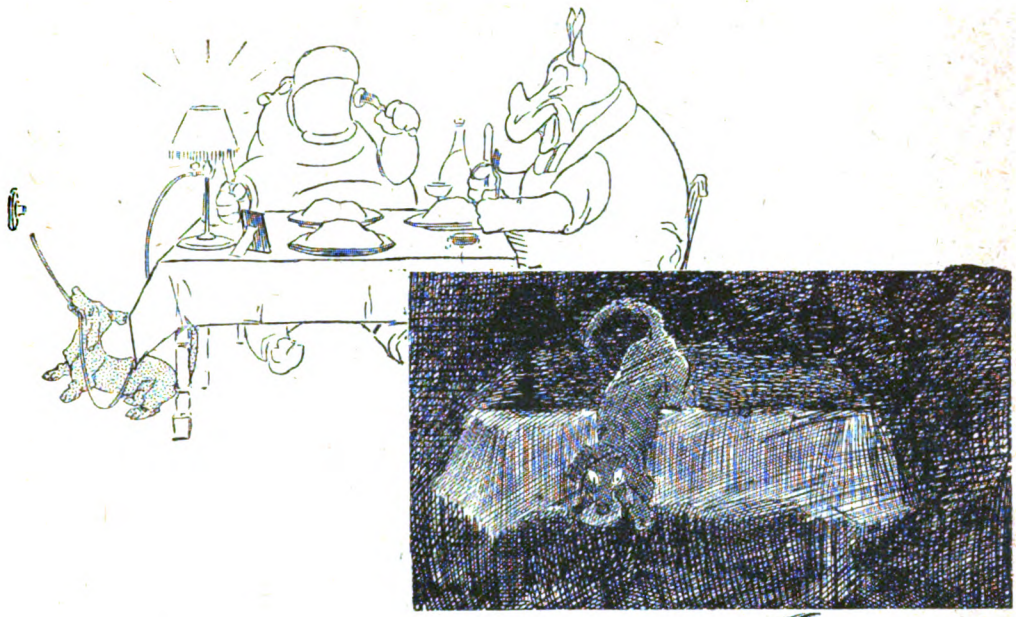
A Little Dinner for Two.

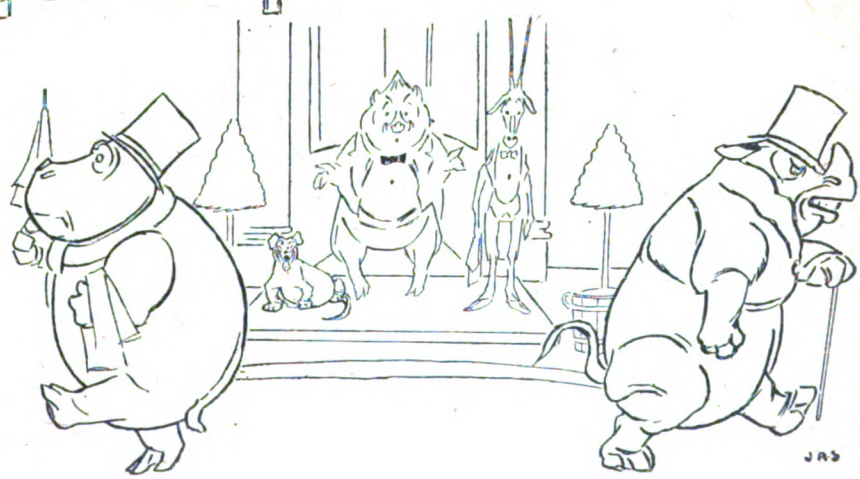
(NOT TO SPEAK OF THE DOG!)

By

J. A. SHEPHERD.






JAS

"OFF AND ON."

By ELIZABETH ASQUITH.

Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.

This amusing little play, by the ex-Premier's clever daughter, has already been acted with great success at Drury Lane.

Time: 11.30 *a.m. Her sitting-room, flooded with sun. She enters restlessly, fumbles with writing paper, bric-à-brac, etc., and goes to the telephone.*

SHE.—Mayfair 2244. No, May-fair 2244. Thank you. Hullo! Yes, I want to speak to Mr. Erskine. Oh, Henry, that *is* you. Don't tell me you don't recognize my voice. You don't sound very pleased. Oh, oh! Don't be civil. I'm in a difficulty—of course. No—I behaved beautifully. And—it was such a beastly afternoon. Not nice, passionate rain, but a conscientious drizzle. My banker had written to say I was overdrawn, and I'm in rags, and mother and father have been arguing all the morning as to whether or not we should go to Yorkshire, father generalizing on the duties of country gentlemen. Mother said it was ridiculous to have an estate in an industrial district, the air was bad for the nerves, and the smuts spoilt the gardens, to which father retorted that if only one didn't live in the twentieth century there would be neither factories nor nerves, and mother cried as if she alone were responsible for modern progress. Then Tom came in and asked me to marry him, and I thought anything is better than the life I am leading now. So I said "Yes." Don't laugh. You are unkind. No, of course I don't want you to congratulate me. I'm going to break it off. Don't say "Oh!" I'm what's called doing the honourable thing, and it's very brave

"ER—LOVELY DAY!"

"HE: 'BUT ARE YOU A FLIRT?'
"SHE (SURPRISED): 'OF COURSE!'"

of me, and I think you might be more sympathetic. No, no. Well, I hate scenes, and as he is to be here any moment, I want you to come and interrupt us in a quarter of an hour. D'you understand? You need only be charming and casual—and—well, like yourself, and the tension will be relaxed. D'you see? Good! Well, then, au revoir. In a quarter of an hour. (*She rings off. Front-door bell. She escapes.* TOM *is shown in. He rushes to the telephone.*)

TOM.—Mayfair 2244. No, May-fair 2244. Thank you. I want to speak to Mr. Erskine. Oh, that is you. I say, I'm in the devil of a fix. Got engaged to Jean yesterday. Beastly wet afternoon—warm room—sudden impulse, and the thing was done. Got to get out of it now. Don't quite know how to begin. Still, one must behave honourably. No good tying oneself for life to a girl one doesn't care for. Wouldn't make her happy. But I do hate scenes. I'd be awfully grateful if you'd pop round in a quarter of an hour and interrupt things. Thanks awfully. Deuced good of you. (*Rings off.*) (*Enter* JENNY. *They shake hands awkwardly, each wondering whether a kiss is expected by the other.*)

HE.—Er—lovely day!

SHE.—Isn't it? I love the sun. It makes me feel like—a Persian cat. I want to sit in it and purr. It's a mystery to me how people ever bring themselves to do anything in fine weather. I always need a wet day to drive me to action.

HE.—Like yesterday.

SHE (*hurriedly*).—Yes. To-day it's almost too drowsy even for flirtation.

HE.—But are you a flirt?

SHE (*surprised*).—But of course! And I always proclaim it; then, instead of accusing me of flirtatiousness, people have to prove I'm serious in order to save their vanity.

HE.—Very ingenious. I suppose you admit of degrees in your accomplishment?

SHE.—Oh, yes! The supreme degree is reached when one is really absent-minded—too bored to talk intelligently.

HE (*feeling uncomfortable*).—You don't mean to say so!

SHE.—But, of course, to make flirtation a work of art, both sides must play it as a *jeu d'esprit*—a sort of emotional lawn-tennis.

HE (*sententiously*).—Both sides must play the game.

SHE.—In other words, not take things seriously.

HE.—Frankly, I don't approve of faking feelings.

SHE.—But I never go near feelings—I just play with emotions. I have never tried to imitate love—I am much too frightened that when the real thing comes it may be spoilt by the memory of the copy.

HE.—A very wise precaution. (*Pulling himself together and inserting a caress into his voice.*) But now, darling, the real thing has come.

SHE.—Oh, I'm so sorry. That is just what I was meaning to talk to you about, only I always am being waylaid by the irrelevant. You've been very good this morning, Tom; you haven't tried to kiss me or make love to me, or anything, and it has made it much easier for me. (*He protests.*) The

"I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU."

fact is, Tom dear, I don't want to marry you.

HE (*indignantly*).—What! Can't you put it a little more gracefully than that?

SHE.—How stupid of me! I meant, Tom dear, I have come to the conclusion that I am not good enough for you, that I should not give you the things you have the right to expect in a wife. To me you are lovable, but not in-lovable.

HE.—Just a moment. Let me talk to you as a brother. You are throwing away the opportunity of a lifetime. I am charming, easy-going, and only moderately selfish. My tastes do not exceed my income. I am an orphan, and have no brothers or sisters. In addition to that I possess a Rolls-Royce, a rock-garden, an avenue, and a picture about which twelve art critics disagree. My appendix has been taken out, and I never write to the papers. My convictions are sufficiently fluid to enable me to listen with pleasure to all points of view, and I am prepared to receive persons and admire pictures of the most variegated types. I am easily led by kindness, and I am frequently moved to lavish generosity. In fact, I should make you an excellent husband.

"I'VE NEVER BEEN SO INSULTED IN MY LIFE."

SHE.—Although you have left out the date of your birth and a list of your clubs and hobbies, I am, nevertheless, conscious of the many joys I am missing. But miss them I must and will.

HE.—Well, up to now you have had it all your own way. Now it's my turn, and I may as well tell you—I, too, had come to break off our foolish engagement.

SHE (*indignantly*).—Foolish!

HE (*firmly*).—Yes, idiotic. I proposed to you because it was a wet afternoon and you wore a pink dress. For the moment I saw you *couleur de rose*. I admit I ought not to have proposed to you. It was a very silly thing to do—inexcusable, in fact. One can have an *affaire de cœur* with a pink dress, but in order to marry, one must be prepared to face every colour in the rainbow, and I'm not. Here you are this morning on a sunny day in a grey dress—no doubt a perfect specimen of a grey dress—but I abominate grey, and I think it highly unbecoming. Net result, I don't want to marry you.

SHE.—Tom, you're perfectly disgusting. I've never been so insulted in my life.

HE.—Well, my dear, perhaps I put it rather crudely—I *am* realistic at moments. It's the spirit of the age. However, no doubt on these occasions it is better to be romantic. Faithlessness should always be carried off by a Byronic touch. (*Prepares himself for a speech.*) Ever since I had the presumption to suggest to you that our lives might be united——

SHE.—Tom, the way you do these things is positively indecent. Do you or do you not mean to suggest that you don't want to marry me?

HE.—I do. At every moment I am increasingly aware of the disparity of our intelligences. Your mind would be contaminated by mine. All of your friends will say you are throwing yourself away, marrying a man so intellectually your inferior.

SHE (*defensively*).—Most clever women marry stupid men for rest.

HE.—Oh, but I'm just too clever for that. Marriage to me would be anything but a rest-cure. And have you considered that a great many of your friends would say you were marrying for money?

SHE (*indignantly*).—None of my friends would dare suggest I was marrying for money.

HE.—Well, the world, then. They never appreciate pure motives, and they never have appreciated me.

SHE (*querulously*).—But I can't think why you don't want to marry me. It's so odd. I'm very easy to live with. I always make the best of things. I've an excellent sense of humour, a charming disposition, and a very affectionate nature. I'm a perfect hostess, and I get on beautifully with servants. I'm artistic and appreciative without having any active talent. I have a great many friends, and my flirtatiousness, applying, as it does, in equal degrees to men, women, children, and animals, need cause you no anxiety. In fact, I should make you a perfect wife.

HE.—No one will ever be able to say we are wanting in material when "Who's Who" approaches us.

SHE. — Only perhaps we ought to get it out alphabetically.

HE.—Don't you think you could get a pink wrap to cover up that deplorable grey thing with?

SHE.—Why?

HE.—I don't want to marry you myself, but it seems impossible that so many qualities should be wasted on someone else.

SHE.—I have been thinking longingly of the rock-garden and the Rolls-Royce, only I would rather have a rose-garden.

HE.—You might have that too.

SHE. — Have you really never written to the *Times*?

HE.—Never! (*With feeling.*)

SHE.—Only I make a point of never abiding by the decisions I make in pink dresses.

HE.—Very well. I suppose my trials have begun already. For better, for worse, for pinker, for greyer—— (*He takes her in his arms.* HENRY *enters and looks at them.*)

CURTAIN.

"BUT I CAN'T THINK WHY YOU DON'T WANT TO MARRY ME."

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

AN AMUSING ILLUSION.

A TOMMY had to have the top of his head shaved for treatment, and some of his pals painted an old lady's face on it. The accompanying photograph was taken with the top of the soldier's head

pointed towards the camera and his face looking down on the ground. The effect of the illusion is wonderfully helped by the realistic manner in which the old lady's front tooth has been depicted.—Mr. T. W. Vaughan Paul.

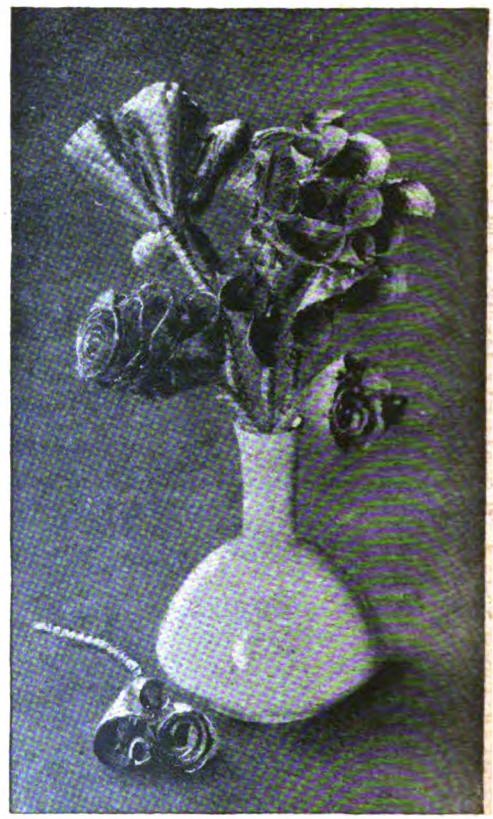
A SILENT WARNING.

CINCINNATI possesses a larger percentage of alien enemies than the great majority of American cities, wherefore certain of her citizens agreed among themselves that an ounce of precaution

might be better than pounds of cure. The erection of the stocks here shown followed, to serve as a silent warning to the aliens who must pass it in such endless numbers of what a traitor may expect !—Mr. Felix J. Koch, Hearne Avenue, Avondale, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.

FLOWERS MADE OF STEEL.

HERE is a new kind of flower, the production of which is entirely due to the war ! The blossoms are certainly rather peculiar-looking, but this is explained by their being in reality thin steel shavings just as they come from the shell-turning lathe.—Mr. W. G. Holder, 4, Derby Road, Bournemouth.



Solution of Last Month's Bridge Problem.

TRICK 1.—A leads a spade, won by B.
TRICK 2.—B leads small trump, won by A.
TRICK 3.—A leads a spade ; Y discards a club,* won by B.
TRICK 4.—B leads club, won by A with the ace.
TRICK 5.—A leads a club, trumped and won by B.
TRICK 6.—B leads trump ; A discards diamond ; won by Y. And A B make the knave of diamonds, the last club, and the last trump.

* If Y discards a diamond, B leads a diamond at Trick 4, and for the rest of the play clubs and diamonds are interchanged. If Y trumps at Trick 3, B plays the four of spades, and the rest is easy.

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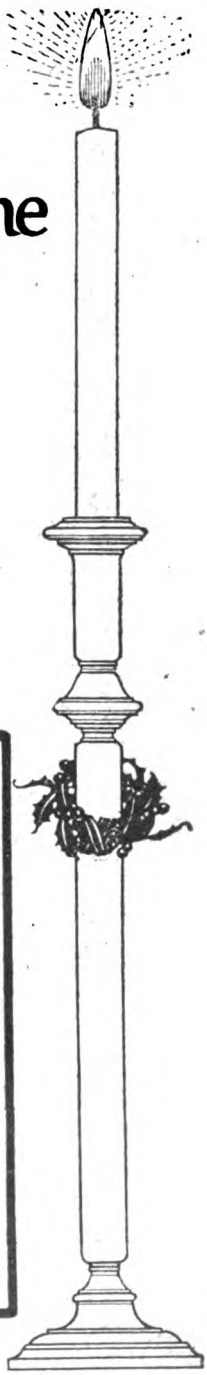

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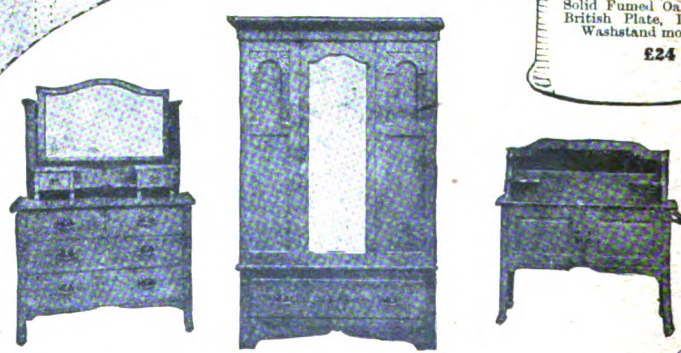

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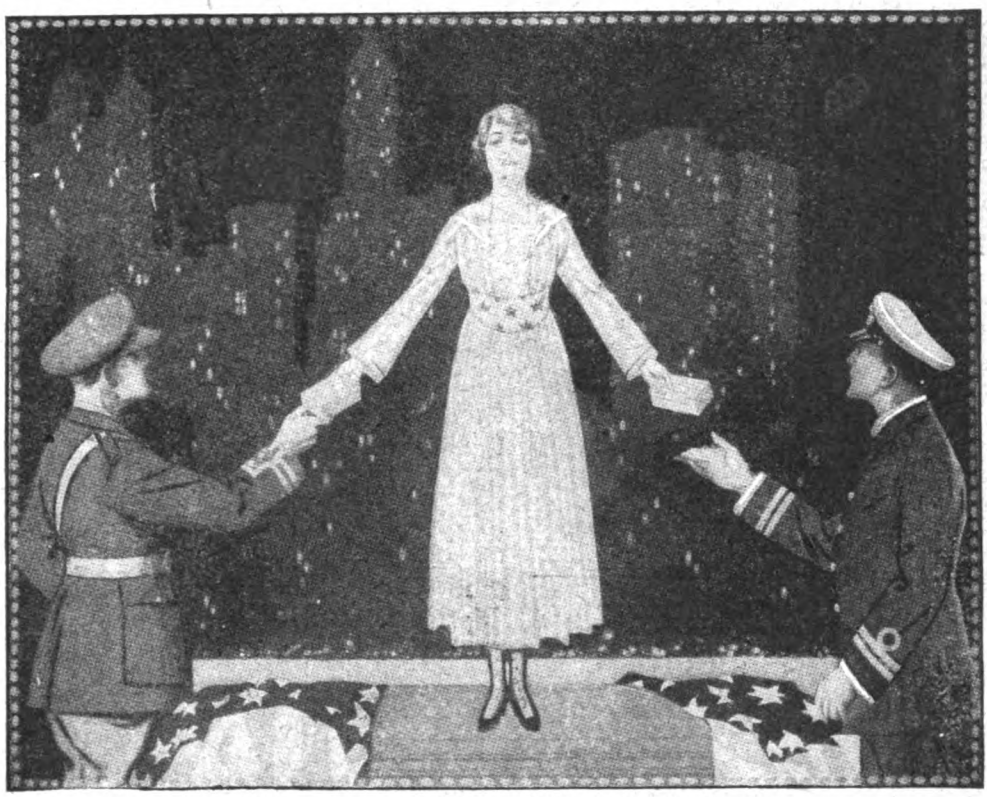

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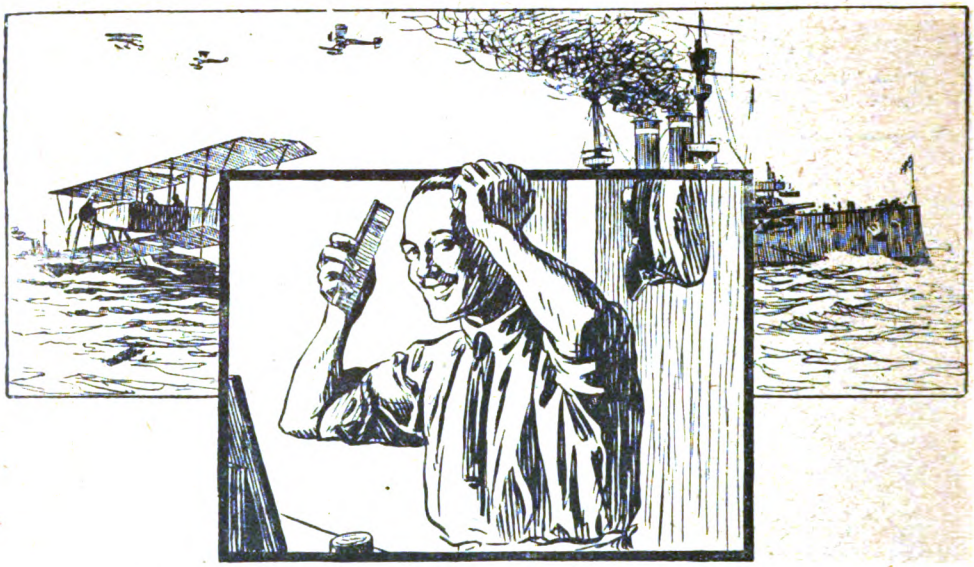

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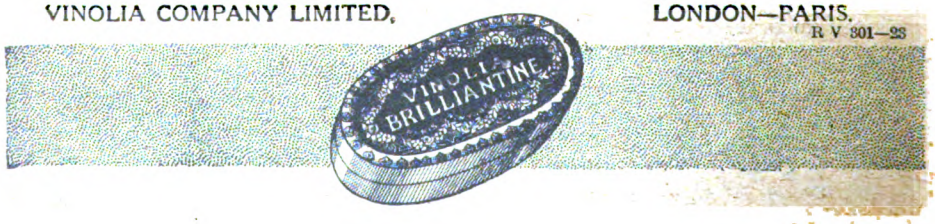

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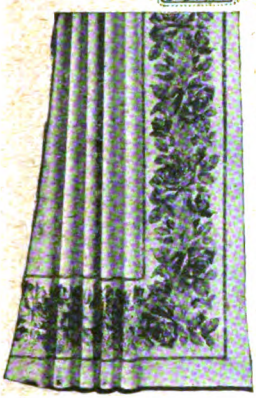

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Prompt, courteous attention is assured at every branch throughout the country, and nothing is left undone that will add to the comfort, convenience, and satisfaction of customers.

We cannot urge too strongly the importance of making early selection.

Gift Boots Departments

CHIEF LONDON BRANCHES:
182 REGENT ST., W. 1, & 112-118 EDGWARE RD., W. 2.
Over 100 *Branches in London Area.*
555 BRANCHES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

Boots Pure Drug Co. Ltd.

Minute to strop!

CLEMAK

Safety Razor

THE MASTERPIECE

Sole Australasian Agents W. Plant & Co. Sydney.

5/9 RAZOR IN CASE WITH SEVEN BLADES

4/6 STROPPING MACHINE WITH VELVET HIDE STROP.

10/6 COMBINATION OUTFIT COMPLETE IN LEATHER CASE.

Challenges comparison with any Razor in the world!

OF ALL CUTLERS STORES &c OR DIRECT FROM

CLEMAK SAFETY RAZOR Co. – IMPERIAL BUILDINGS, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C. 2

Moment to clean!

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA

in paper and post to us to-day with P.O. for **6/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Silk Union, and securely packed.

Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **3/6** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

OFFICERS' *Service Boots*

IDEAL FOR THEIR PURPOSE.
Most approved pattern.

Model Illustrated - 35/-

To places where we have no branch, goods will be sent by post on receipt of order and remittance. Foreign remittances must include cost of postage.

Freeman, Hardy & Willis, Ltd.
The Leading Footwear Specialists
Head Office and Warehouse, Leicester
Over 470 Branches in England

Summon Khoosh to your aid

if your appetite is at all languid. If a keen hunger does not signal the approach of meal times—have a dash of Khoosh Bitters in—*what you like.*

The active bitter principle of Khoosh Bitters has an excellent tonic effect, which stimulates the appetite and aids digestion.

Khoosh-Bitters

Obtainable at all high-class Hotels, Restaurants, and from Wine Merchants. Keep a bottle at home. Khoosh Bitters blend equally well with spirits, wine or water.

The Khoosh Bitters Proprietary Ltd., London England. A3

MATERNITY
Everything for Mother & Baby

Under Royal and Distinguished Patronage.

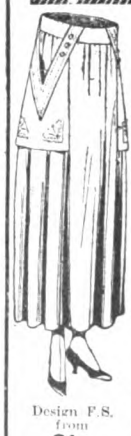
By Royal Letters Patent.

Sent on Appro. on receipt of Cash.

FREE CATALOGUE
of SKIRTS, GOWNS, CORSETS, Fashion Bulletin and Pattern Book of Latest Materials Post Free.

"NATIONAL BABY CATALOGUE," containing great values in Layettes, Shortening Sets, Cots and all Nursery Requisites, sent Free on request.

FINLAY'S guarantee your money back in case of dissatisfaction.



Design F.S. from **21 -** Other Designs from

12/11

Tailor-made to Measure by experts.

These Skirts and Gowns can be instantly increased 4 to 16 inches without losing shape. Can be worn as an ordinary garment after maternity.

12/11 Honestly worth 21/-

Combined Maternity, Nursing and Abdominal Belted Corset. Most graceful, hygienic and serviceable. Recommended by the Medical Profession as absolutely indispensable. State size required when ordering.

LADY MANAGERESS.
FINLAY & SONS, Limited,
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London Showrooms—47, Duke Street (Oxford Street), W. 1.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST JEWELLERS

XMAS GIFTS AT NEXT TO FACTORY PRICES

WRITE TO-DAY.

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Here you will find all the most original, beautiful, and useful Gifts you can imagine, just what you want, for everybody, at next to

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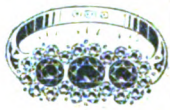
A full month's trial allowed. Money refunded if not completely satisfied.

HALF-HOOP RING.
5 fine Diamonds, in 18-ct. engraved Gold setting - - **35/-**



HANDSOME CLUSTER RING.
3 beautiful Sapphires, surrounded with Diamonds in 18-ct. Gold - - - **£10**

LOVELY GOLD GEM BROOCH.
New Lattice design, set with Pearls and Amethyst, Hall-marked Gold - - **21/-**

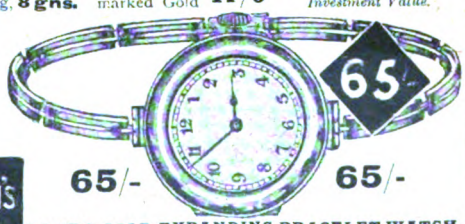
CHARMING GEM PENDANT.
Exclusive design, set with Pearls and fine Peridot centre and drop, Hall-marked Gold **47/6**

COLONIAL ORDERS
promptly attended to by special manager. Catalogue mailed free to any address.

SINGLE STONE DIAMOND RING. — Large lustrous stone, in massive 18-ct. claw setting, **8 gns.**

EXQUISITE RING.
Newest design, 2 large Diamonds, and perfectly cut Rubies **£15**
18-ct. Gold - - -
Investment Value.

THE "ACME" WRIST WATCH.
With H. SAMUEL'S high-grade fully-jewelled and warranted movement, perfect timekeeper, black or white luminous dial, handsome Silver Case - - - **30/-**



FULL MONTH'S TRIAL

65/- **65/-**

LADY'S GOLD EXPANDING BRACELET WATCH.
Fine fully jewelled and warranted movement, in handsome new design, Hall-marked Gold Bracelet - **65/-**

= H. SAMUEL =

31, MARKET ST., Manchester

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Some of H. Samuel's 77 Large Branches—

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22, Broadway, Stratford, E.
40 & 42, Powis Street, Woolwich.
47, King Street, Hammersmith.
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Edinburgh: 25, Princes Street. 40, North Bridge.
Glasgow: 134 & 136, Argyle Street.
Newcastle: 2, Grainger St., W.
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See Free Book for Full List of 77 Large Branches.

H. SAMUEL, LTD.

Give them all Ingersolls this X'mas

An Ingersoll "Radiolite" is the most welcome and useful gift you can send to your friend in the Army, Navy or Air Service, or anyone who needs a watch which tells the time day and night.

Radium is the most expensive mineral substance in the world, and yet it is the substance employed in combination with other minerals to give the luminous power to the figures and hands of the Ingersoll "Radiolite" watches.

12/6

Ingersoll "Radiolite."
A sturdy watch for general wear and hard usage.

GENUINE Ingersoll WATCHES HAVE NAME ON DIAL.

The "Radiolite" grade of luminous material is used exclusively on Ingersolls, which are sold by thousands of shopkeepers throughout the Kingdom; but if your dealer cannot supply you, any Ingersoll model you wish will be sent post free upon receipt of price.

There are Ingersoll models, to suit the purse and needs of everybody, from 60/- down to 9/-

25/-

Waterbury "Radiolite" Figures.
A jewelled watch, dependable in every way.

Handsome illustrated catalogue sent post free upon request.

INGERSOLL WATCH CO., Ltd., 258, Regent House, Kingsway, London, W.C 2.

For the Festive Season

BIRD'S CUSTARD

BIRD'S CUSTARD is not only delicious beyond compare, but most wholesome and nutritious besides.

Whether served as HOT SAUCE with Plum Pudding or Mince Pies, or as creamy egglike Custard, it is the one dish that all children love and all adults enjoy.

Try also BIRD'S Custard with Stewed Prunes both *Hot.*—No dish more delightful! *The stewed Prunes need no sugar.*

Winter Puddings to make and serve with BIRD'S Custard.

Apple Pudding,	Prune Pudding,	Bread Pudding,
Plum Pudding,	Marmalade Pudding,	Ginger Pudding.

These puddings generate warmth and energy, cost less than meat, and are equally nutritious. A spoonful of creamy BIRD'S Custard as Hot Sauce to each slice gives zest and adds nutriment. It makes even a plain pudding a delightful treat.

Sold in pkts. boxes and large tins. 255e

Now have come the long nights—why not have

RILEY BILLIARDS in *your* Home?

You play as you pay—and Seven Days' Free Trial Guarantees Your Satisfaction.

WHEN a Riley Billiard Table comes into the house the young people generally take up the game with such zest that their play rivals their elders' in proficiency. And this great contributor to the "home spirit" has the great advantage that it yields a leisure-pleasure to the grown-ups equally with the children. On a Riley Miniature Table you can play the most delicate strokes that give an adult enjoyment—yet the play is so easy that the children put an enthusiasm into it that is remarkable.

Riley's no-trouble way to pay.

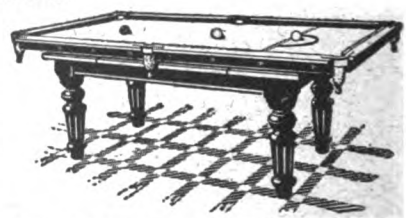
10/- down

Send 10/- postal order to us this evening, and within a few days the **£6 16s. 0d.** size RILEY MINIATURE TABLE (the most popular size) will be dispatched, carriage paid (no charge for packages), to any address in the United Kingdom within a mile of a Railway Station. The remainder you pay in fourteen monthly instalments of **10/-**

Any other price of Table in 15 equal monthly payments.

Cash prices are as follows:—

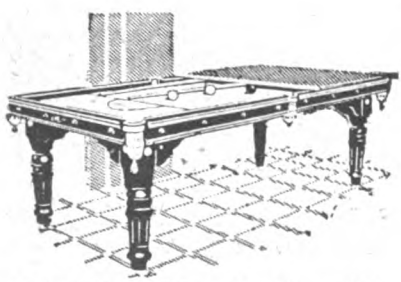
Size 4ft. 4in. by 2ft. 4in. ...	**£4**	**10**	**0**	*Or in* 15 *monthly payments of*	**6/6**
,, 5ft. 4in. by 2ft. 10in. ...	**5**	**10**	**0**		**8/-**
,, **6ft. 4in. by 3ft. 4in.** ...	**6**	**16**	**0**		**10/-**
,, 7ft. 4in. by 3ft. 10in. ...	**9**	**5**	**0**		**13/6**
,, 8ft. 4in. by 4ft. 4in. ...	**12**	**15**	**0**		**18/6**



Riley Miniature Billiard Table shown resting on ordinary Table.

RILEY'S MINIATURE BILLIARD TABLE

fits securely on any dining table. Solid mahogany, French polished, with best slate bed, low frost-proof cushions, crystalate balls and all accessories included.



Riley's "Combine" Billiard and Dining Table.

RILEY'S "COMBINE" BILLIARD AND DINING TABLE.

Handsome as a dining table and perfect as a Billiard Table. Solid mahogany; low frost-proof rubber cushions; best slate bed; patent automatic raising and lowering action. Dining-table top of polished oak or mahogany.

Cash prices are:—

Size 5ft. 4in. by 2ft. 10in.	**£13**	**10**	**0**
,, 6ft. 4in. by 3ft. 4in.	**15**	**0**	**0**
,, 7ft. 4in. by 3ft. 10in.	**18**	**10**	**0**
,, 8ft. 4in. by 4ft. 4in.	**24**	**10**	**0**
,, 9ft. 4in. by 4ft. 10in.	**32**	**0**	**0**

Or in 13 or 18 monthly payments.

Seven Days' Free Trial

Couldn't be a better guarantee of satisfaction than Riley's promise to accept the table back if after seven days' trial you are dissatisfied. Send first instalment at once and make this test quite free.

FREE on receipt of post-card, full detailed Illustrated Catalogue of Billiard and Dining Tables, and small or full-sized Tables.

E. J. RILEY, Ltd., Warton Works, ACCRINGTON.

London Showrooms: 147, Aldersgate Street, E.C.

A3N

"Premier"

The Whisky de Luxe

In pre-war days acquired an exclusive reputation for chaste quality.

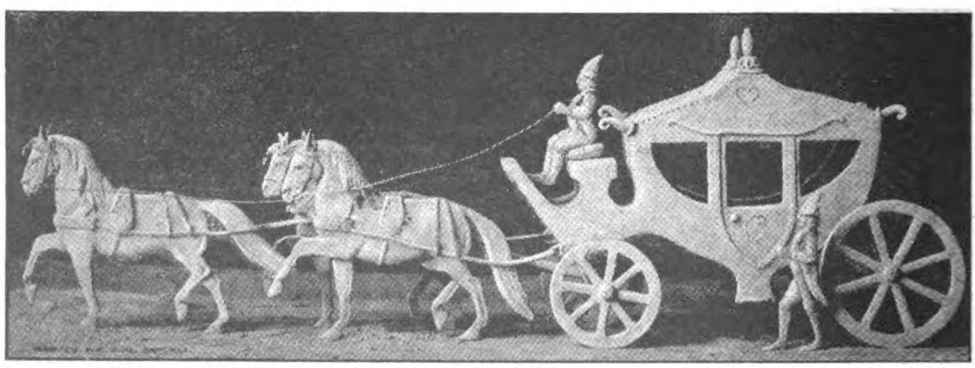
To-day PREMIER is unique: the qualities which made it supreme — *delicacy, age and bouquet* — are absolutely maintained.

WRIGHT & GREIG, Ltd.,
Distillers,
Glasgow and London.

Harbutt's PLASTICINE

PLASTICINE has been an old and valued friend to many of us in the past, and the new generation—that immense army of little people who are always coming on—are equally charmed and delighted with it. Is there anything more thrilling than being able to *make* some of the wonderful things in Fairy Tales, for instance? Look at the illustrations, the Fairy Godmother, the Pumpkin, the Mice and the Lizards, changed in a moment by a wave of her magic wand into the beautiful Coach, Horses, and Footmen, both groups modelled in Plasticine; and although the Coach and Horses is rather difficult, the Fairy Godmother is not, and it is easy to select other stories with quite simple modelling. Try it with your little people; it is wonderful.

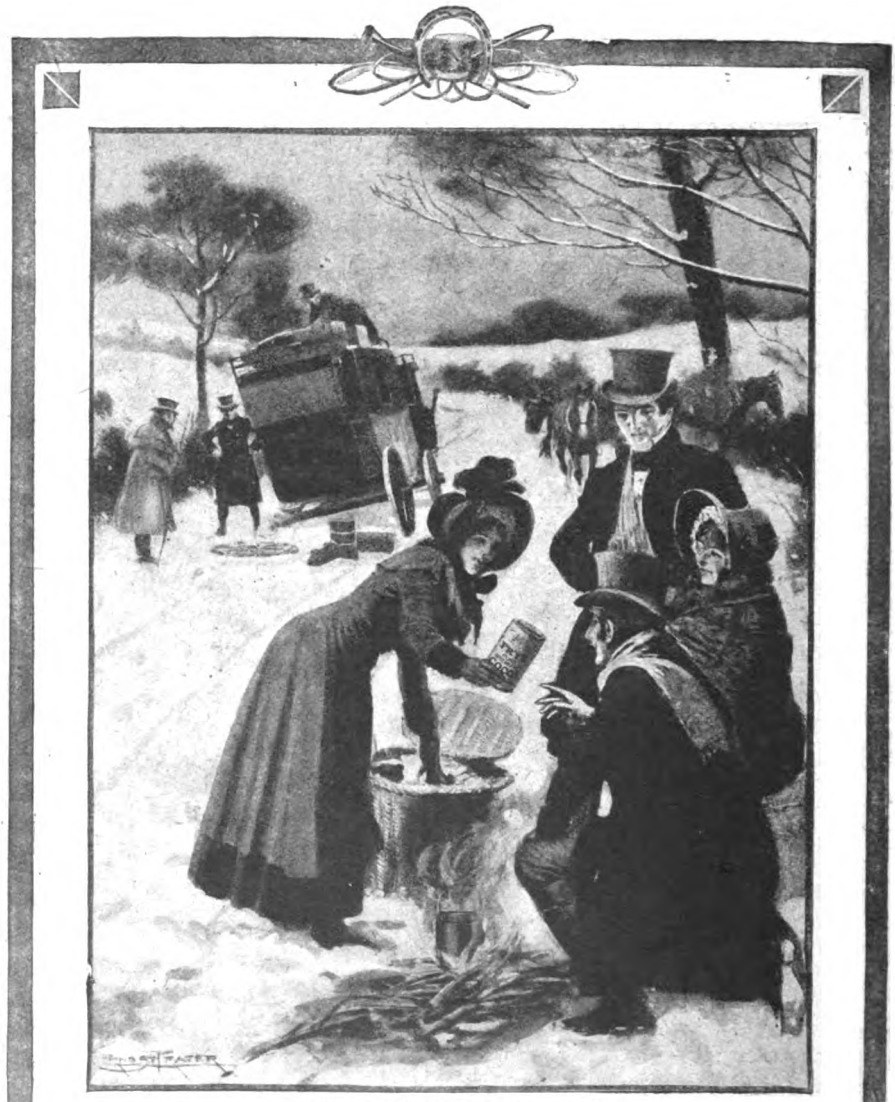
Complete Home Modelling Outfits, 1/7, 2/3, 2/11, 3/6, 5/7, 6/10, post paid.



HARBUTT'S PLASTICINE, Ltd., 3, Bathampton, BATH.

London Showrooms: 34, Ludgate Hill, E.C.4.

Humber
THE QUALITY CAR.
After-war Humber Models will represent the finished product of the most expert craftsmanship (now engaged in producing supreme aircraft engines) combined with unexcelled quality of materials and ceaseless vigilance in manufacture.
Send address for details of new models.
HUMBER LIMITED, COVENTRY.
LONDON: 32, Holborn Viaduct, E.C.1. 60-64, Brompton Road, S.W.3.
LONDON REPAIR WORKS: Canterbury Road, Kilburn, N.W.6.
Southampton: 25-27, London Road.
Agents everywhere.



"A FRIEND IN NEED"

In the Good Old Coaching Days

Fry's Cocoa and Chocolate were, as now, acknowledged to be the best.

THE COCOA OF SEVEN REIGNS.

FIRST IN 1728 FOREMOST EVER SINCE.

Fry's PURE BREAKFAST COCOA

Nerve Support

A Valuable Suggestion.

Send a tin of "Ovaltine" to your Soldier or Sailor Friend; whether in Camp or at the Front, in Hospital or on board Ship.

Nothing could be more acceptable, as "Ovaltine" provides the most nourishing and sustaining food drink possible. As a restorative in fatigue there is nothing to equal it.

There is no fuss or trouble in making; "Ovaltine" is simply stirred into hot water, or a little condensed milk may be added if desired.

Include a tin of "Ovaltine" in your next parcel, or ask your Chemist to pack a tin ready for posting.

P. 200

Overwork, worry and concentrated mental effort cause excessive wear and wastage of the nerve cells, which frequently results in Nervous Breakdown. To guard against this, extra food must be supplied to rebuild the worn-out cells.

Nothing is quite so good as "Ovaltine" for this purpose, as it contains just the food elements necessary—in a light, concentrated and easily digestible form—to restore the nerves and meet the extra demand on the system.

"Ovaltine" is a concentrated extraction of Malt, Milk and Eggs, Cocoa flavoured, and makes a delightful beverage, which is taken between and with meals, instead of the usual tea, coffee and cocoa.

OVALTINE
TONIC FOOD BEVERAGE

Builds up Brain, Nerve and Body.

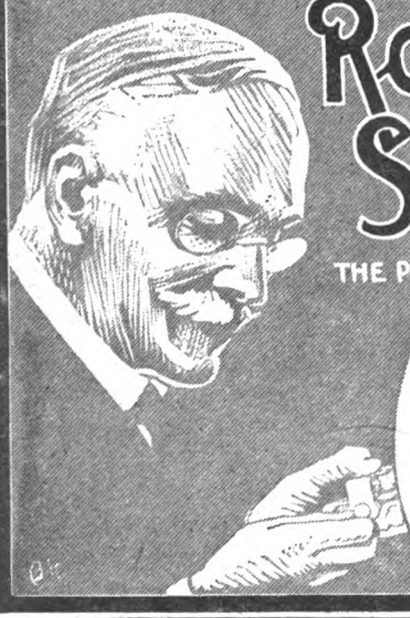
Sold by all Chemists and Stores at 1/4, 2/3 and 4/-

For Free Trial Sample and Descriptive Booklet send 2d. in stamps for postage and packing.

A. WANDER, Ltd., 173, Cowcross Street, London, E.C.1.
Works: King's Langley, Herts.

MILLIONS OF BLADES WASTED ANNUALLY - DON'T WASTE YOURS

GET A CLEMAK Royal Stropper 12/6



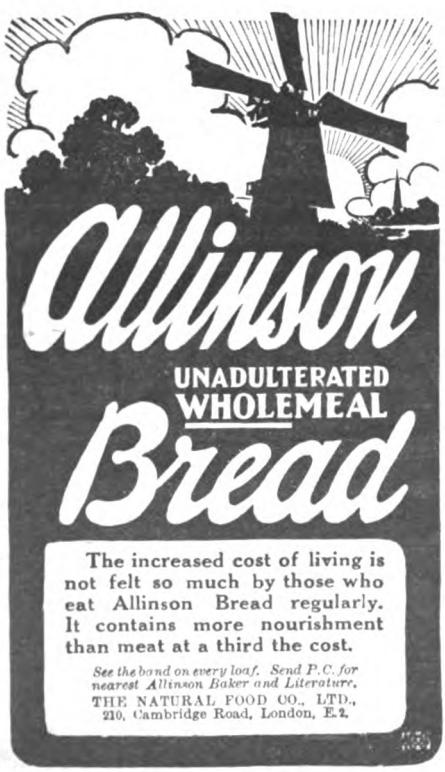
THE PERFECT PRINCIPLE OF RAZOR SHARPENING

FOR GILLETTE BLADES

OF ALL CUTLERS STORES &c -OR POST FREE FROM THE

CLEMAK SAFETY RAZOR Co,

IMPERIAL BUILDINGS, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2.



Allinson

UNADULTERATED WHOLEMEAL Bread

The increased cost of living is not felt so much by those who eat Allinson Bread regularly. It contains more nourishment than meat at a third the cost.

See the band on every loaf. Send P.C. for nearest Allinson Baker and Literature.

THE NATURAL FOOD CO., LTD., 210, Cambridge Road, London, E.2.

BREECHES FOR THE MILITARY

CUT TO MEASURE BY EXPERTS IN BEDFORD COTTON CORDS

16/6 *per pair.*

WOOLLEN BEDFORD CORDS, WHIPCORDS, etc.

27/- 37/6 45/- 50/-

No matter where you are we can **send you Patterns** and **Self-Measure Form** with all instructions, also Measuring Tape and Guarantee to Fit you Perfectly. (Please state if thin materials are required, and whether for Civilian or Military wear.)

BREECHES FOR THE CIVILIAN

Breeches are most comfortable for workers on the land. Our Riding Cords and Tweeds are exceptionally hard wearing.

BEDFORD CORDS & RIDING TWEEDS.

14/6 15/11 21/- 25/-

BEDFORD RIDING BREECHES CO. (Dept. M.S.),

29, Great Titchfield Street, Oxford Street, London, W.1.

Watchfulness

In the Language of Flowers, Dame Violets signify Watchfulness, or – more sentimentally —"You are Queen of Coquettes." Both significations spring from the same idea—art rivalling nature.

Better than to counterfeit Nature, is to use Art and Science to aid Nature in the development of Beauty. For instance, instead of using cosmetics to gain a *semblance* of a beautiful complexion, use a Soap in which Science and Art have combined with an exact choice of pure and suitable materials for the preservation and development of the soft, fine skin, the clear, exquisite complexion of childhood—McClinton's Colleen Soap.

Incomparable for the Complexion

McClinton's
Colleen
Soap

Price 4½p per Tablet. 3 Tablets 1/1½

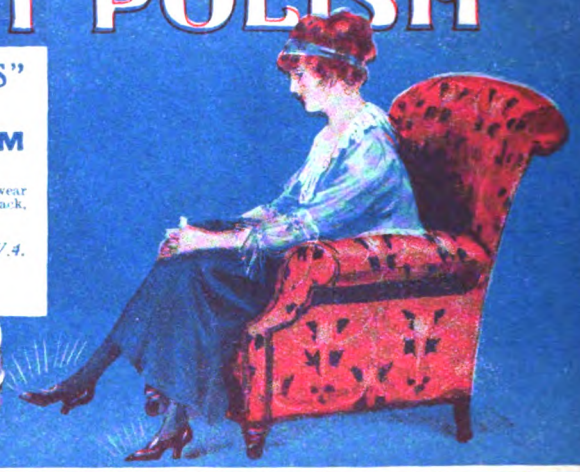
COUPON

FREE *The Colleen Book of British Beauty, containing six beautifully coloured miniature postcards of famous Bygone Beauties, on receipt of this Coupon with 1d. stamp, or with a generous-sized sample cake of the famous Colleen Soap for 2d. for packing and postage.*

McCLINTON'S, LTD. (DEPT. F21), DONAGHMORE, IRELAND

CHERRY BLOSSOM BOOT POLISH

"BRIGHT REFLECTIONS"
will come to all this Yuletide who use
CHERRY BLOSSOM BOOT POLISH,
the famous preparation which makes footwear so brilliant, supple and waterproof. In Black, Brown, and Tonette.
Sold in Tins by all Dealers.
Chiswick Polish Co., Ltd., Chiswick, W.4.



TONETTE DARK STAIN POLISH
gives the correct colour - a rich dark brown polish - to Sam Browne Belts and all Tan Military equipments.

Send a post card for the free Creamola Recipe Book.

Just now, when Eggs are at a Premium, Creamola is found of incalculable advantage by Mothers and Housewives.

CREAMOLA

"The Queen of Custards"

contains all the sustaining qualities of fresh eggs, and a Creamola custard pudding not only looks it but tastes it, too.

Its delicious, rich, creamy qualities are particularly inviting, and there is no food children appreciate more nor thrive on better, for Creamola is both satisfying and nourishing.

Creamola is equally suitable for custard pudding or pouring custards, and is simply delicious as a sauce for steamed puddings, &c.

Try a 6d. packet: it contains three times the quantity of any other high-grade custard.

Sold by all Grocers & Stores in 1½d., 6d., and 1/- packets, and in air-tight tins at 1/2.

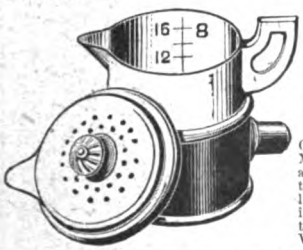
In case of difficulty, send P.O. 1/3 for pound package—postage free.

D. K. PORTER & CO.
GLASGOW.

SEASONABLE GIFTS OF GREAT UTILITY.

BRITISH MADE.

The following examples of Electric Heaters are selected from our season's Novelty Catalogue, which will be mailed free to applicants mentioning "The Strand."



Food Warmer.

No. 9810.

Post Free **11/6**

Capacity ½ pint. Marked with graduated scale showing tablespoons and liquid ounces marked inside. Absolutely the best of Food Warmers.

The Electric Heaters can be used wherever the electric current is installed. There is an entire absence of dirt; cleanliness and wholesomeness are assured.

Boiling Mug.

No. 7810.

Post Free **11/6** each

Capacity 1 pint. This Boiling Mug is designed to heat its contents in a very few minutes, and can be used as a cup—retaining all the aroma and losing none of its heat. Ideal for all hot drinks.

We supply a complete adapter and cord to permit of the Heaters being used from any convenient Lampholder by removing the bulb and inserting the adapter. Price **4/-** each.

Shaving Pot.

No. 8810.

Post Free **11/6**

Will heat half-a-pint of water in three minutes. Clean and free from trouble.

NOTE.—Please state voltage of electric supply when ordering.

The "Ellesmere" Electric Torch.

British made.

Size 9½ by 1¼ in.

Suitable for use in all countries and climates.

A most Reliable and Efficient Torch. All metal finish with permanent switch. Complete with Long-Life Battery and Bulb. Price, **7/6**. Postage 6d. Overseas postage 1/6 extra.

Ward & Goldstone

SALFORD MANCHESTER

First Grade

30/-

You *can't* possibly get wet in the

Mattamac

Feather weight Waterproof

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual three-guinea Weatherproof. In utility also, it equals its twice-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third, and is absolutely Waterproof. Though light and compact-folding, it is windproof as well as wet-proof, and can be used *additionally* as a light Overcoat for Driving, Motoring, etc.

WEIGHT 19 ozs. (FIRST-GRADE.)

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.

For Lady or Gentleman - **30/-**

Also made for Officers, Rankers, Cavalry, and V.T.C.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The coat worn by the 6ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket.

3 OZS. HEAVIER THAN AN UMBRELLA.

You can carry a "Mattamac" as easily as a newspaper or umbrella, or you can fold it to fit into your jacket pocket, or Attaché Case, when the Sun shines. Yet it gives complete protection in the worst weather—at half the cost and one-third the weight of ordinary Weathercoats.

The Lady "Mattamac" Model **30/-**

19 OUNCES WEIGHT

Khaki-grey V.T.C. Model **30/-**

Sporting "Mattamac" Model **30/-**

Lady Belted Model **35/-**

Infantry Khaki Model **30/-**

Cavalry wide-skirted (23 ozs.) Khaki Model **42/-**

Illustrations are direct drawings from actual photographs of ordinary stock "Mattamacs" at 30/- each. Made in 6 Shades, 8 Models, and 40 Sizes.

MADE FOR EVERY OUTDOOR PURPOSE

Lady, Civilian and Sporting Models, in Fawn, Olive, Grey, or Tan Shades, **30/-**; Infantry Model in Khaki, **30/-**; Cavalry, wide skirted (22 ozs. weight), for Officers, **42/-**; and V.T.C., in Khaki-Grey, **30/-**. Made entirely from the genuine all-weather-proof "Matta" Fabric with adjustable wind-cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, Raglan sleeves, roomy under-arms, and the famous cut of Conduit Street.

"MATTAMAC" ART BOOKLETS POST FREE

Illustrating 8 Models, and describing "Matta" Trench Waders, Sou'-westers, and "Pullovers." A postcard brings the Series and Patterns of "Matta" Fabric, or you can safely send your order now.

SENT ON 7 DAYS' FREE APPROVAL

Buy without risk. Send chest measurement **over** waistcoat, height, and remittance, stating colour, and your "Mattamac" will be sent post free in Great Britain (extra abroad). If you are not fully satisfied, you can return it within 7 days of receipt, and get your money back in full. Write for Booklets, **"Series 26 D,"** including prevailing shades of "Matta" Fabric, Ordering Forms, etc., to the Sole Makers of "Mattamac" Stormproofs—

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45, Kingston House, **CONDUIT STREET, London, W.1.**

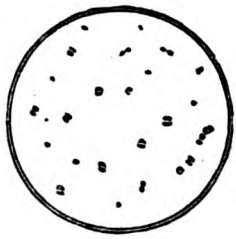
And at 29, Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth.

Fog Coughs and Colds

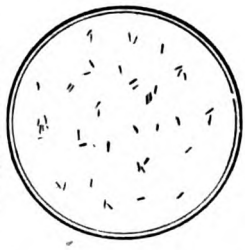
The millions of tiny water particles which compose fogs, collect and hold the soot and dust of our cities and large towns.

The dampness of the fog lowers the vitality, and the soot, etc., irritates the delicate mucous lining of the throat—both conditions which lay the system open to microbe attacks.

You are constantly surrounded by myriads of microbes waiting for such opportunities. In foggy weather, or at any time when there is danger of infection, you will be able to neutralise any ill-effects, if one or two Evans' Pastilles are allowed to dissolve in the mouth when Danger threatens.



Even in perfectly healthy throats there are myriads of these tiny microbes—the Micrococcus Catarrhalis. They only await a chance to attack when the throat is weakened or inflamed. Evans' Pastilles will work against these microbes.



The Bacillus Influenzæ which is responsible for all cases of Influenza. These illustrations are from actual micro-photographs of the microbes magnified 940 diameters, taken at our Runcorn Bacteriological Laboratories.

The undoubted success which has attended the use of Evans' Pastilles has produced a good number of worthless substitutes. To protect the public and to prevent substitution, we have reproduced here the Pastille and box for reference.

Each Pastille can be recognised by a raised bar marking, and none are genuine without this mark.

"See the Raised Bar on each Pastille."

EVANS' Pastilles

The effective precautionary measure against the microbes of Influenza, Catarrh, Pneumonia, Diphtheria, etc.

The unique antiseptic qualities possessed by Evans' Pastilles aid the natural resistance against all microbes which attack the mouth and throat. The Pastilles are made from a private formula and they are free from poisonous alkaloids. They strengthen the vocal cords, allay and prevent irritation of the throat, and loosen any mucous secretions which may be present.

TRENCH ODOURS Evans' Pastilles are splendid for preventing the unpleasant effects which result from trench odours, and they are invaluable for service conditions. Send a tin to the Front.

Obtainable from all Chemists and Stores, or Post Free from the makers—————— **1/3** *per tin.*

Evans Sons Lescher & Webb, Ltd.,
56, Hanover Street, —————— **Liverpool.**
And at London and New York.

Wc/2

The 'Allenburys' Foods.

MOTHER AND CHILD.
Baby, 6½ months of age. Fed from birth on the 'Allenburys' Foods.

Healthy Children

Can only be reared by giving suitable nourishment. If unable to feed your child, the proper substitute is a food that corresponds in all respects with human milk. The "Allenburys" Milk Foods are so prepared as to remove the difference between cow's milk and human milk, and are most easy of digestion. They are suitable alike for the delicate and robust, and when used as directed, form the best means of rearing a child by hand. The No. 1 Milk Food may be given alternately with the natural food without fear of causing digestive disturbance.

The 'Allenburys' Foods

MILK FOOD No. 1. *From birth to 3 months.*
MILK FOOD No. 2. *From 3 to 6 months.*
MALTED FOOD No. 3. *From 6 months upwards.*

The "ALLENBURYS" RUSKS (Malted).
From 10 months.

A Pamphlet on Infant Feeding and Management, Free.

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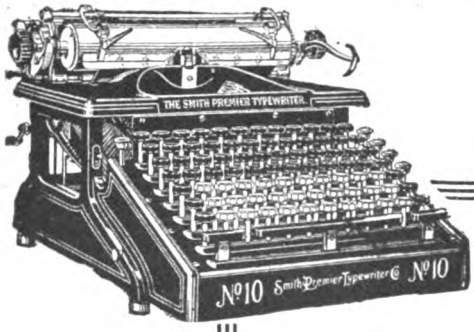

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MECHANICAL Progress is the order of the day ; and in the Business World the most progressive policy reveals itself in the adoption of the most up-to-date office equipment for the purpose of saving time and increasing output with a minimum of effort and fatigue.

In no detail of office equipment is this Mechanical Progress more completely illustrated than in the latest models of the Smith Premier Typewriter. A Typewriter is as essential as a telephone, and the

SMITH PREMIER

owes its unrivalled position to the simplicity of its construction combined with strength, durability and absolute reliability.

No matter what the service demanded of the Smith Premier it has proved itself, under the severest tests, unsurpassed by any writing machine of any type whatever.

The fundamental principles of its construction —its special and distinctive features—are described in detail in an illustratea booklet, which we shall be most happy to send you if you will 'phone, or send your address on a card to the

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Smith Premier House,

6 & 7, Queen Street, London, E.C.4.

Established 1887. Telephone : City 5360.

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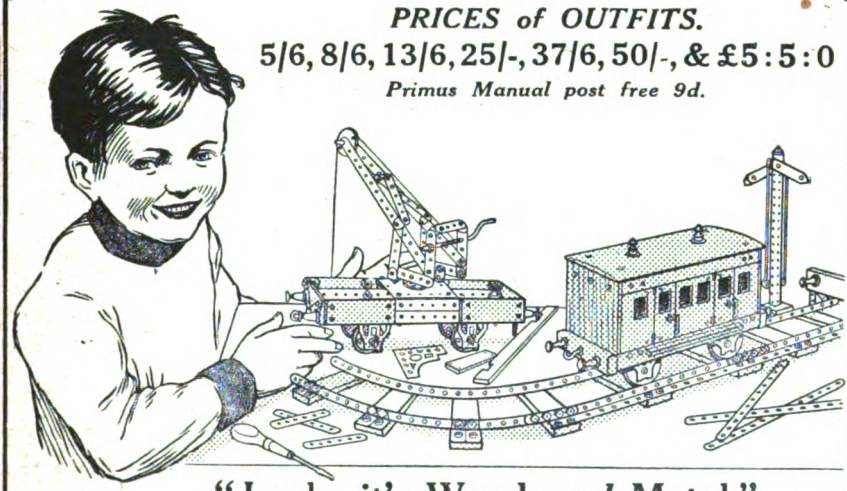

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OF ALL STORES TOY SHOPS ETC.

Booklet post free from the Manufacturers.
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CAMERA HOUSE, FARRINGDON AVENUE, LONDON, E.C.4.

What Mr. Horatio Bottomley

— THINKS OF —

ALKIA SALTRATES

THE BEST OF ALL SALINES for Liver, Kidney, or Rheumatic Disorders, Etc., Etc.

— AND —

REUDEL BATH SALTRATES

THE BATH PREPARATION PAR EXCELLENCE, cures Corns, and all Foot Troubles permanently, stops rheumatic or other aches and pains within ten minutes.

[NOTE:—It gives us very great pleasure to announce that the fearless and outspoken editor of "John Bull," whose readiness to praise anything good is only equalled by his promptness in condemning anything bad has joined the long list of prominent men and women who have used our preparations with results so gratifying that they are only too glad to acknowledge the great benefits derived —SALTRATES, LTD.]

JOHN BULL

TELEPHONES: GERRARD 9637. 9638.
TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS "HEROICALLY, LONDON."

EDITORIAL OFFICES,
93, LONG ACRE,
LONDON, W.C.

25th July, 1917

The Manager,
The Saltrates Co., Ltd.,
214, Gt. Portland Street, W.

Dear Sir :-

Now that all German Spas are taboo, may I congratulate you on your Alkia Saltrates and Reudel Bath Saltrates, which to my mind (and body) beat Carlsbad into a cocked hat.

In future, with your help, I shall certainly support Home Industries by taking my cure on the spot.

Yours faithfully,

Horatio Bottomley

What is Alkia Saltrates?

Dissolved in plain water it gives you an **exact reproduction of the essential medicinal constituents** found in famous Spa waters.

The dose. Less than half of what you have been accustomed to take of ordinary salines.

The taste is pleasant, children cry for it. It makes a sparkling effervescent draught.

The effects. Stimulates the liver, flushes the kidneys, purifies the blood, corrects hyperacidity and other stomach disorders, and eliminates all uric acid or any other impurities from the entire system. Best of all anti-rheumatic agents. Guaranteed free from any depressing or other bad after effects.

The price. Only 2/9 a large bottle. **Enough** to last the whole family for weeks.

What is Reudel Bath Saltrates?

Dissolve this in plain hot water and you will have an exact reproduction of the highly **medicated** and **oxygenated** curative bathing waters found at celebrated Continental and other springs and spas.

The effects.—Softens and brings corns right out, root and all, so there is nothing left to sprout a new corn again, as when you merely cut the top off or burn it off with caustic liquids or plasters.

A **Saltrated Bath** will stop any rheumatic or other aches and pains in muscles or joints **within ten minutes.** Also its strongly antiseptic and healing qualities will cure **bad skin affections** quickly and permanently.

The price.—1/9 a half-pound or 2/9 a pound. Only a handful of the concentrated compound is required for a full bath, or a tablespoonful for a strong foot bath.

The above preparations can be obtained from any chemist. Complete satisfaction is guaranteed every user, or MONEY BACK IN FULL IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT QUESTION. Saltrates, Ltd., 214, Gt. Portland St., London, W.1.

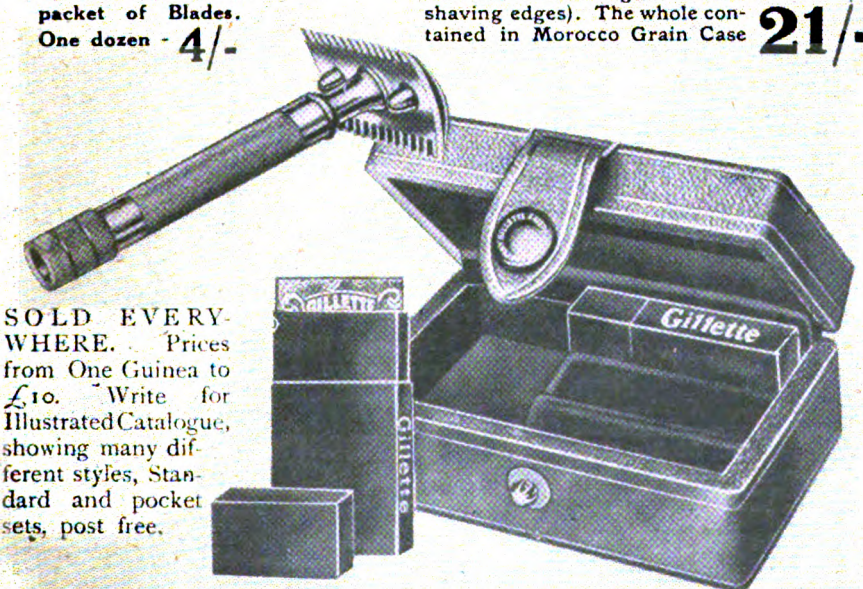
On Christmas Morning.

True—many possible gifts are not good enough; others you know he doesn't want. But a *Gillette Safety Razor* you can be *sure* of—for *any man*—anywhere.

Gillette Standard Set.

The original Gillette Set that introduced the modern way of shaving—no stropping, no honing—known the world over. Contains Triple Silver-plated Razor; Blade boxes with 12 double-edged Gillette Blades (24 shaving edges). The whole contained in Morocco Grain Case **21/-**

About the nicest "little gift" for the Gillette user is a packet of Blades. One dozen - 4/-



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TRADE Gillette MARK
KNOWN THE WORLD OVER

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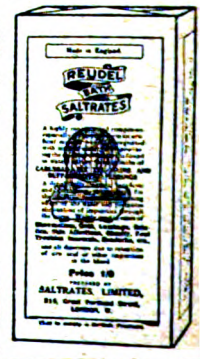

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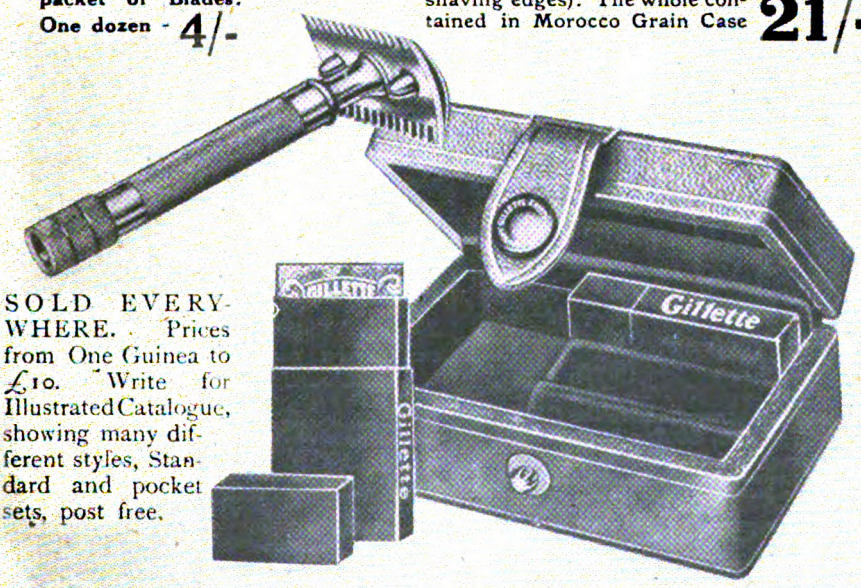

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Send him a box of Carasadas this XMAS!

Actual Size.

Carasadas are appreciated just as much by the man who smokes an occasional cigar as by the man who is continuously smoking and wants to enjoy his second or third cigar as much as his first.

CARASADA Petit Corona

has the Havana flavour, softened to a degree which makes it an altogether fascinating cigar. Made for the most part from the choicest Vuelta Abajo Filler Tobacco, and always sold in perfect condition.

Try a sample 50 box—you will enjoy every one of the 50 cigars, and will decide to smoke them regularly.

Per 46/- 100

Box of 50 for 23/6
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The 'North Berwick.'
This shoe illustrates one of our highest grades of brogues for ladies' wear.

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help the springy step and ensure freedom from foot-weariness, damp, and discomfort.

For every Norwell model is built with instep firmly arched, with full support for the ankle, of flexible waterproof leather that gives long wear and is cosily finished inside.

There is full money-value in each Norwell model.

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One of our most stylish designs in buckle brogues. Uppers of

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Here is one of the most perfect brogues for gentlemen; hand-made

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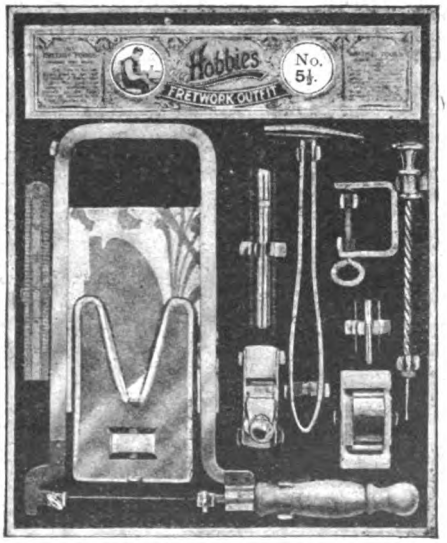

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Packed in varying degrees of strength to suit every class of smoker

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MILD AND MEDIUM

MILD (Gold Leaf)		**MEDIUM**	
100 for **4/6**	50 for **2/3**	100 for **3/5**	50 for **1/9½**
24 for **1/1**	12 for **6½d.**	20 for **8½d.**	10 for **4½d.**

IN PACKETS AND TINS FROM ALL TOBACCONISTS AND STORES

These Cigarettes (and Tobaccos) are also supplied at DUTY FREE RATES for the purpose of gratuitous distribution to wounded Soldiers and Sailors in Hospital

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is the result of almost a century's experience in the art of whisky blending, and its delicate flavour and delightful bouquet are evidence of the high-class malts from which it is distilled.

The whiskies in its composition are of great age, and immense reserves ensure that "IONA" will not deviate one particle from the outstanding qualities which have for so long distinguished it.

If you have not tasted "IONA" you have not realised the perfection of Scotch Whisky.

"IONA" can be obtained from your wine and spirit merchant. If he hasn't it in stock he can get it for you.

It is worth while insisting on "IONA."

G. & J. Maclachlan, Ltd.,
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THE "SWAN" FOUNTPEN

Give a "Swan" Pen this Xmas.

Correspondence is the cement that binds friends separated by land and sea. The gift of a "Swan" Pen is the token of your wish to bind friendship closer and make it more enduring.

The "Swan" itself is wonderfully durable. It will write for many years without showing any sign of wear. The longer it is used, the better it seems to become. It is a joy to have

Give a "Swan" Pen because it is a beautiful and useful gift, one that will be treasured; and because the "Swan" is the best of Fountain Pens.

AT PRE-WAR PRICES FROM 10/6.

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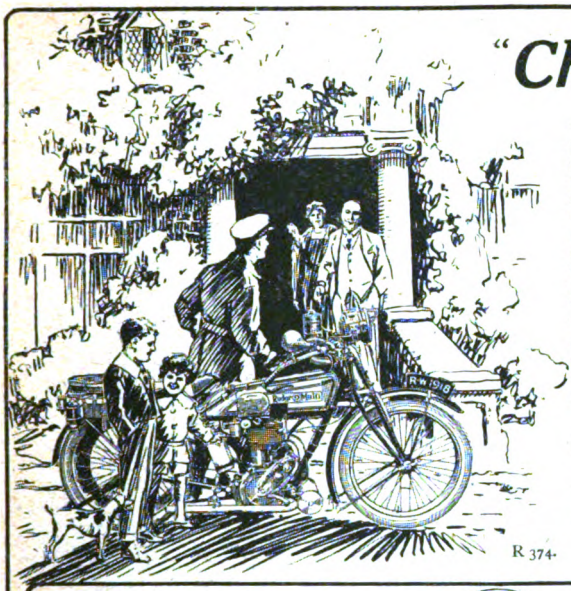

R 374.

"Cheerio, Dad!"

"Got the jolly old pass after all, but, by Jove! it was touch-and-go. Hung us up till the last minute—most of the boys lost the train, but I had the Rudge Multi tuned up to lightning pitch, and all the trains in the A.B.C. couldn't have got me here more quickly or more comfortably."

For every emergency and for the hard racket of every day, there is no machine that can compare with the Rudge Multi. It gets you there when you want to be there, with never an irk, with no delay.

Three gruelling years of war service have tested and proven the durability, reliability and speed of the finest road pal a man ever had—the Rudge Multi.

Everything is fully described in the catalogue. Write for a copy now; post free from nearest agent, or

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By Appointment Cycle Makers to H.M. King George.

Rudge Multi

Mothers should try

Benger's Food for themselves. Those who are nursing will find the greatest benefit for both themselves and infant.

Take the Benger's Food between meals, as an *addition* to the daily diet. It promotes a high state of nutrition and a full supply of natural milk.

BENGER'S Food

although among the "lightest" foods known, is all nutriment. Mothers, when overtired or out of sorts, will relish and enjoy it. Flavour with tea, chocolate, or coffee, for a change.

From a Lady M.D., L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., Ed., L.F.P.S., Glasgow.

"Dr. — considers it invaluable for nursing mothers, especially for taking during the night, when an easily assimilated food is required."

Benger's Food is sold throughout the World in sealed tins by Chemists, etc.

Full particulars and directions with each tin. Sole Proprietors and Manufacturers:
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216b

Don't Sneeze!
GLYKALINE
will cure your Cold.

FOR 83 years past, in all parts of the world, Leath & Ross's **GLYKALINE** has been the proved and trusted remedy for **Colds, Coughs, Bronchitis, Asthma, Catarrh, &c.** Time—the only true test—has proved its value. Many people tell us they have sometimes been persuaded to try some other remedy, but that they have always been glad to go back to the old favourite—GLYKALINE. It is pleasant to take, its effect is wonderfully quick. Even a severe Cold or Cough is often cured in so short a time as twenty-four hours. You may safely rely on this age-proved remedy, which is equally suitable for adults or children.

Read the following:

TALON ROUGE, writing in *Vanity Fair*, says: "The other morning I awoke with the feeling of a general depression, the certain precursor of a cold. I sped to the nearest Chemist's, and found the longed-for remedy. BEFORE NIGHT I WAS CURED. It is a colourless, tasteless fluid called GLYKALINE, which will infallibly do away with the most obstinate of colds."

For prices see below.

FOR ALL NERVE PAINS such as **Toothache, Neuralgia, Sciatica, Gout, Lumbago, &c.,** the application of Leath & Ross's **NEURALINE** gives wonderful relief.

Read the following:

"Mrs. EDGAR cannot express her thanks to Lady Matheson for the **Neuraline.** It proved the most successful remedy she had ever applied. The relief experienced was almost instantaneous."

For prices see below.

The miserable, exhausting pains of Rheumatism, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Lumbago, Gout, Sciatica, &c., throw a shadow across the path of many a life. There is not a single case which will not be relieved, and very few which, with perseverance, will not be cured, by the internal use of **Leath & Ross's Anti-Rheumaticus.** This pleasant, almost tasteless remedy is supplied in liquid or tablets.

Read the following:

"Sister M. writes to say she has had Rheumatism for more than twenty years, and has tried various remedies, but has found nothing to equal Anti-Rheumaticus, and will advise everyone suffering from that complaint to get some."

For prices see below.

As a general Tonic, for creating **vitality,** producing **appetite, fortifying the nervous system,** for the internal treatment of **Neuralgia, Toothache, &c.,** for the prevention of **Colds** and **Influenza,** there is nothing to equal Leath & Ross's **P.M.Q.** (Phospho-muriate of Quinine). It is sold in liquid or tablet form, and is so concentrated that a bottle may be comfortably carried in the pocket. No matter how long it is taken, it will never do anything but good, and its constant use renders the blood immune from the attacks of many disease germs, particularly those which cause colds and influenza.

All chemists and stores should have the above Remedies in stock, but if you find any difficulty in getting them promptly, fill up or mention the coupon below for a supply at special price by return post. Say whether liquid or tablet form is preferred in the case of Glykaline, Anti-Rheumaticus, and P.M.Q. Prices **1/3, 3/-** and **5/-.**

POST THIS TO-DAY.

LEATH & ROSS (Dept. K). **295, High Road, Brondesbury, London, N.W.6.**

Please send me a
(**1/3** bottle for **1/-**)
(**3/-** bottle for **2/6**) of { GLYKALINE / NEURALINE / P.M.Q. / ANTI-RHEUMATICUS
(**5/-** bottle for **4/6**)
(*Strike out name and price not required.*)
for which I enclose remittance value.....

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Sudden heating or cooling of the body is a menace to health.

Wolsey Underwear, being pure wool, maintains the body at an even temperature, protecting it from extremes of heat and cold.

Wolsey costs more to-day because of the enhanced price of raw materials—but it is cheaper than doctors' bills. For health-protection insist on Wolsey.

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Pure Wool Underwear

Made in many weights and sizes, for Men, Women, and Children. Guaranteed unshrinkable, any garment found otherwise is replaced free of cost.

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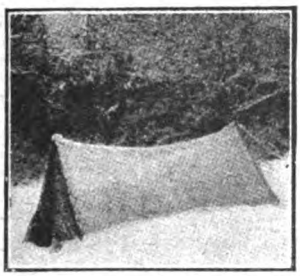
SPECIALLY LINED TENTS FOR THE TROPICS.



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Made in three sizes. Weight of smallest only 22ozs. Above illustration will give some idea of what it will stand in the way of hard weather and rough usage. White, green, or brown roofs.

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Weight complete with poles, pegs, and lines, only 7lbs. As supplied to officers of the 1st and 2nd Life Guards for Active Service at the Front. Roofs in green or brown for Active Service.

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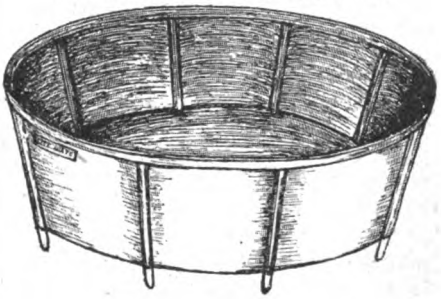

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Measurements—Open: Diameter, 28ins.; depth, 12ins. Closed: Diameter, 10ins.; length, 13ins. Width of parcel 4½ins. Weight (complete with 8 wooden supports) only 15½ozs.

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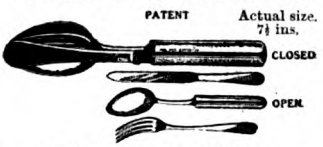

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WEARS WHITE THROUGHOUT.

No joints to rust. Simply arranged. Full size spoon.

Price 4/-, Carriage Paid.

We specialise in supplying lightweight tents for service in the field, as already supplied to thousands of Officers of the British Expeditionary Forces.

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and has brought with it days that are dark, dismal and cold. Make your home bright, attractive and cheerful by furnishing with Allen's Durobelle Fabrics. They will bring a dainty touch of colour and harmony and help you to forget that Winter has come.

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Durobelle Fabrics can be washed again and again without losing their delicacy of colouring. Any length is replaced free if colour fades.

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DUROBELLE Rugs from **11/9** each.

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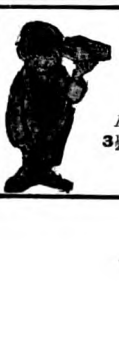

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Delightful flavour, finest value obtainable.

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TOZANA removes dandruff, promotes the growth of healthy hair, but contains no grease.

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Whether smoked much or little it is always the same—always good. And it has the unusual virtue that it does not burn the tongue.

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Recorder the same, but fuller flavoured.

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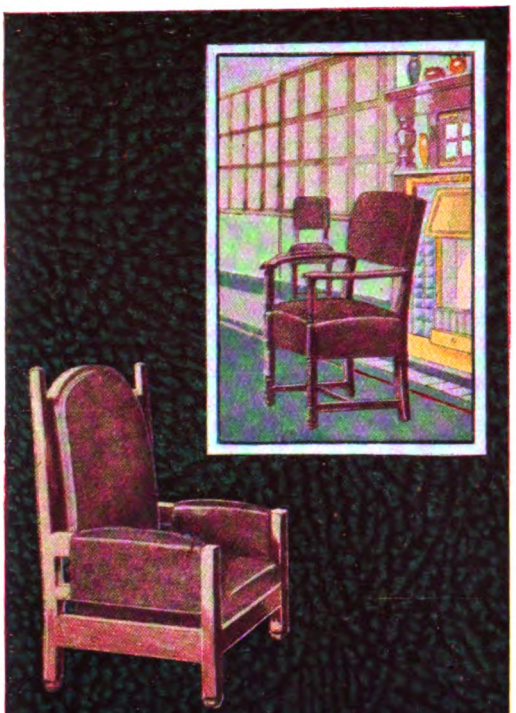

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It looks just like leather, but wears better: does not crack or peel: is water, stain and scratch-proof, and when soiled can be made like new by washing with soap and water. Because of its superiority it has superseded leather in a large number of hotels and public institutions.

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One Dye for *all* Fabrics —So Easy to Use.

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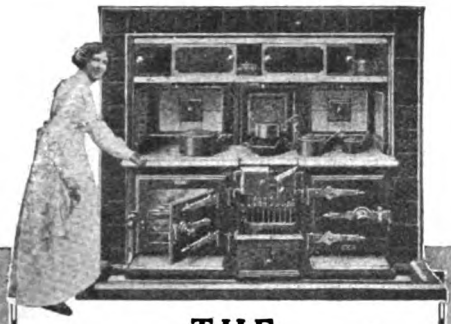

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THE "CARRON" Range embodies all the essential features of other ranges, IN SIMPLE FORM, affording thorough efficiency without complicated mechanism.

Soundly built of the best metal, all parts give long service, and thus do not require continual renewing. Flues are formed in cast-iron, thereby obviating unsatisfactory working through inefficient brickwork flues. The "Carron" Range is thoughtfully designed to utilise and distribute the maximum of heat with the least consumption of coal. The progress of cooking is watched through the INNER GLASS OVEN DOOR, obviating its unnecessary opening and consequent fall in temperature.

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Sold by all Ironmongers and Hardware Merchants.

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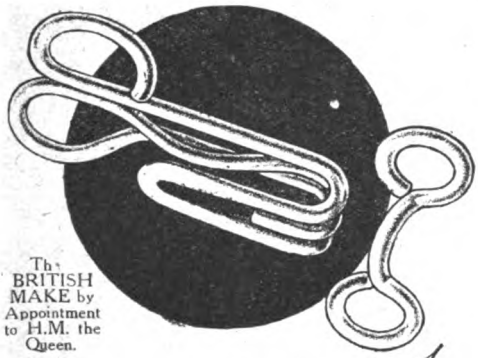

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Every essential of a perfect fastener—

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Standard Life Deferred Assurances for Children offer exceptional attractions, for example:

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The Children's Delight.

Ask your Toy Dealer for this New Toy, also for the "ISA" Performing Plush Animal Toys.

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Such may be the possession of any woman who takes proper care of her skin. Feed it, cleanse it, smooth and soften it by regularly using Pomeroy Skin Food—the *real* skin-beautifier.

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INGRAM'S "Agrippa" BAND TEAT and VALVE

"Baby likes it." BRITISH MADE.

PATENT NEW BAND

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ALWAYS GRIPS—NEVER SLIPS. FITS ANY BOAT-SHAPED BOTTLE.

The average Teats and Valves bought for use with this shaped bottle are unsatisfactory. They get soft and slack; slip off and waste food. Here is a Teat and Valve that cannot slip off because of the broad patent band. Hygienic and Sterilizable. Obtainable from all Chemists. Interesting Booklet, "Baby's Health," sent post free.

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20/- *carr. paid.* 7 days' trial allowed.

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DYSPEPSIA IS DOOMED

EVEN SEVERE AND LONG STANDING CASES OF DIGESTIVE AND STOMACH TROUBLE YIELD QUICKLY TO TREATMENT WITH

BISURATED MAGNESIA.

Supplied under Guarantee. Satisfaction or Money Back.

DYSPEPSIA and most other forms of digestive and stomach trouble were doomed from the hour scientists discovered (1) that such troubles were usually due to excessive acidity of the stomach, and (2) that Bisurated Magnesia was capable of neutralising this dangerous acid and rendering it harmless. Fortunately it is now within the power of every sufferer to obtain a supply of this Bisurated Magnesia from the chemist, and by taking half-a-teaspoonful in a little water after meals to secure immediate relief and quickly effect a radical cure of the trouble for which, perhaps, a remedy has long been sought in vain. Even severe cases of long standing yield readily to this remarkable home treatment, as the following letter proves. Writing from 57, Hugh Gardens, Benwell, Mr. W. Armstrong says: "I suffered with Indigestion and Acidity for 5 or 6 years, during which time I tried nearly all the advertised remedies without obtaining the desired results. I then resolved to give Bisurated Magnesia a trial, and I can honestly say this has done me more good than all the others put together."

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This is but one of many hundreds of letters received, all testifying to the benefit derived from the use of Bisurated Magnesia, and, after all, it is only natural that such results should be obtained, for Bisurated Magnesia neutralises the acid which is the underlying cause of digestive and stomach trouble; it also stops the food fermenting, dispels wind and soothes and heals the inflamed lining of the stomach. These results are certain in practically every case. So certain, that every package of genuine Bisurated Magnesia, which can be obtained of all high-class chemists, is accompanied by a binding guarantee of satisfaction or money back. That is, to say, no matter what the nature of your trouble, or how long you have suffered, if Bisurated Magnesia fails to give you instant relief and effect a speedy cure, your money will be refunded and the trial will cost you nothing.

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What a bother those loose ends of hair are! They won't stay up.

You should use Newey's Springbok Hairpins, those with the wavy waists. They gently but firmly hold the hair and cannot fall out.

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Effervescent Tablets

dissolve into a fragrant, antiseptic, neutralising "bath" for the Mouth and Throat, which supplements the admirable execution of the tooth-brush—an implement which cannot reach the throat. SOTOL DOES.

It is in the mouth and throat that numerous illnesses are started, and the most scrupulous care is necessary to keep them clean and free from germs.

A SOTOL GARGLE OR BATH effectually washes the *throat* as well as the mouth (the solution is brought back into the mouth from the throat and afterwards ejected, so that anything likely to cause trouble is removed altogether), and is the most approved method of expelling and neutralising hostile germs, &c.

SOTOL is equally effectual as a Nasal Douche.

Chemists sell 40 Sotol "Baths" for 1s. 6d., or 100 for 2s. 9d. Direct supply for extra 3d. (postage) from the Manufacturers, THE WESTERN DENTAL MFG. CO., Ltd., 74, Wigmore Street, London, W.1. Testing samples 2d. stamps.

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THE USES OF LUCE'S

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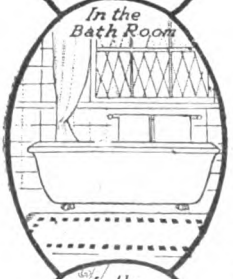

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FOOT'S ADJUSTABLE REST CHAIR

Automatic Adjustable Back.

The "Burlington" *(Patented).*

An ideal Easy Chair that can be instantly changed into a semi or full-length Couch.

SIMPLY press a button and the back declines or automatically rises to any position. Release the button and the back is locked. The sides open outwards, affording easy access and exit.

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All Makes. Highest Cash Prices. No. 10 Remingtons & No. 5 Underwoods particularly wanted. Write for quotations stating model and serial number. 'Phone City 4778. Typewriters rebuilt & repaired

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It never fades or washes out, whether you prefer the kind used with or without heat.

Sold by all Stationers, Chemists and Stores. **6d.** and **1s.**

Used in the Royal Households.

NOTHING LOST.

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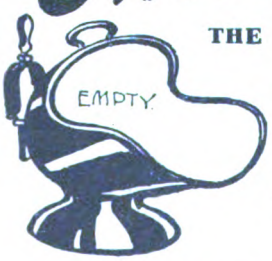
Increase Your Coal Supply



THE DIFFICULTY OF OBTAINING A FULL SUPPLY OF COAL

is overcome by the use of a very simple contrivance which reduces coal consumption by half, whilst the heat obtained is materially increased. THIS BOLD STATEMENT may be verified without cost by a 10 days' FREE TRIAL of

HOUGHTON'S ADJUSTABLE GRATE.

It modernizes your fireplace, saves coal, and gives increased warmth. You can fix it yourself in five minutes, no structural alterations are needed.

Made in 3 sizes. Prices 12/6, 13/6, and 14/6.

Send a post card for full particulars to Dept. No. 5,

THE ADJUSTABLE GRATE COMPANY, ILFORD.

I WAS BALD

I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet, thirty years ago, I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald-head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.

SEEKING A HAIR GROWTH.

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that, in the hope of growing new hair, I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "The white brother without a scalp-lock."

AMERICAN INDIANS NEVER BALD.

I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands around their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret? Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.

MY HAIR GREW AGAIN.

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots. Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly.

The hair that grows is strong and silk-like. It has beautiful lustre, and imparts the appearance of health and vigour.

DO YOU WISH HAIR GROWTH?

Having established London headquarters, I now give notice that you may obtain Ko-tal-ko at any good chemist's or drug store. After buying it apply regularly, and watch the result. You are likely to be astonished and delighted, particularly if you have tried various liquids, lotions, etc., without benefit. Or, if you would like a testing box by post, send sixpence (P.O. or stamps) to J. HART BRITTAIN, 2, PERCY STREET (201H.), LONDON, W.1, and you will receive the box, descriptive pamphlet, etc., post free.

Jack! do look
at the lovely polish I've
got with that sample tin of

JOHNSON'S
PREPARED WAX

IT cleans, polishes, and finishes in one simple operation. Every family has dozens of uses for JOHNSON'S PREPARED WAX—it is just as necessary around the house as soap. Polish all your furniture—including the piano—with JOHNSON'S PREPARED WAX—you will be surprised at the wonderful improvement. It entirely removes the "cloudiness" from Mahogany, restoring its original gloss. There is nothing like JOHNSON'S PREPARED WAX for polishing linoleum and floors—it preserves, protects, and imparts a hard, lasting finish. Less than half-an-hour is required for polishing a good-sized room, and it may be walked upon immediately.

JOHNSON'S CLEANER

is for badly-stained and greasy surfaces. It prepares the surface for finishing with Johnson's Prepared Wax. As it contains no grit or acid, it cannot harm the finest finish.

STRAND MAGAZINE. 12.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, 244, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

I should like to try Johnson's Prepared Wax and Cleaner. Enclosed you will find 8d. for a generous sample tin of each.

Name.....

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Australian Address: 379, KENT STREET, SYDNEY.

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500 illustrations in 25 colours and gold.

Goods shipped to all parts of the world.

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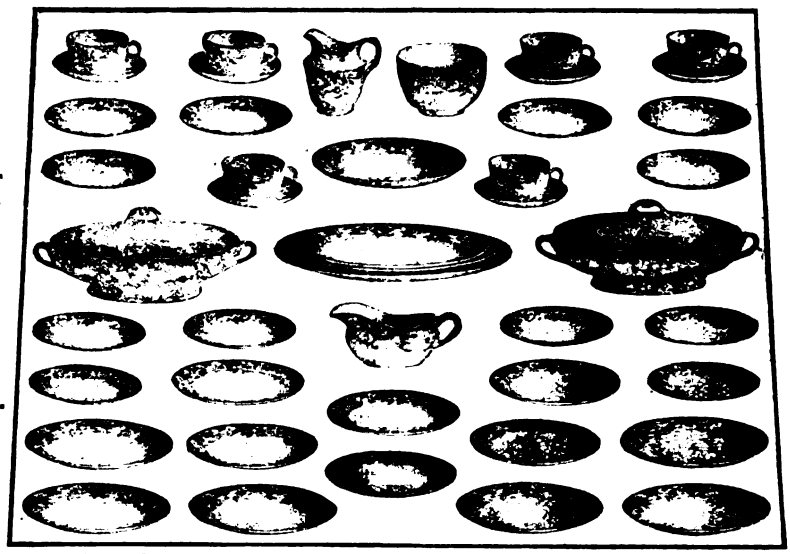

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There is NO "unstamped" Dri-ped.

THIS announcement is to correct a widespread fallacy.

ALL leather is either DRI-PED or NOT DRI-PED. If it is Dri-ped it bears the Dri-ped Diamond in Purple every few inches. If it does not bear the Purple Diamond it is NOT Dri-ped, and the word Dri-ped must not be used in ANY way in connection with the sale of such leather.

IT has been brought to our notice that in several cases ordinary Waterproof Chrome leather has been offered and sold by Factors and Repairers as "unstamped Dri-ped." It is not unstamped Dri-ped.

THE Purple Diamond Stamp implies an exclusive process and a high grade of hide which no ordinary chrome leather embodies. Anyone selling ANY other leather as Dri-ped is infringing our Trade Mark, and liable to prosecution.

We should feel indebted to you if you would refer us to any case of which you know, in which substitutes are being offered or sold as Dri-ped.

WILLIAM WALKER & SONS, Ltd., Dri-ped Advtg. Dept., County Buildings, Cannon Street, Manchester.

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Icilma protects the hands

Women-workers who regularly use Icilma Cream never have to waste time over a rough, harsh skin or chapped, coarse hands.

Icilma Cream keeps the hands and skin soft and smooth in all weathers. It is the only toilet cream which contains Icilma Natural Water. This refreshes the skin as nothing else can and stimulates it to healthy action.

British made, fragrant, non-greasy and economical—a shilling pot lasts several weeks.

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Cream

Same quality, same price, 1/- everywhere,
Icilma is pronounced Eye-Silma.
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Sphere is *the* garter for the Anti-Air Craft men, for it is readily adjusted, very comfortable in wear, and keeps the hose neat and tidy at all times. Made with cord or pad fastening in a variety of artistic colourings. No metal touches the leg. Soft rubber button with a firm grip that does not tear the hose.

1/- to 3/- from all Outfitters, or
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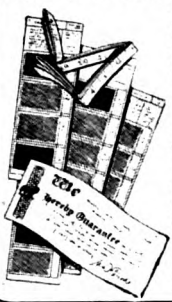

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It softens and improves the **Hands, Face and Skin.** Allays **Irritation** caused by **Heat** and **Roughness** occasioned by **Frost & Cold Winds.** Free from Stickiness or Grease.

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CURES without painful operations, lancing or cutting, in all cases of **Ulcers, Abscesses, Whitlowe, Boils, Fatty or Cystic Tumours, Piles, Fistula, Polypus, Poisoned Wounds,** and all forms of **Skin Disease.** Its penetrative power makes it the best application for curing all **Chest** and **Bronchial Troubles**

SEND TWO 1d. STAMPS FOR SAMPLE.

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You are not invited to purchase this instrument merely for patriotic motives, but because no other instrument made, either in this country or abroad, can surpass its splendid qualities of tone and touch.

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CHILDREN NEED FOOD THIS CHRISTMASTIDE.

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THE HOMES ARE CARING FOR TOMMIES' BAIRNS.

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Made in England.

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Propelled by Pedal

Give your children healthy Auto-Scooter Joy Rides.

Easy. The rider propels the Auto-Scooter with the ease of an ordinary bicycle by simply pressing the lever with the foot. The free-wheel then allows the Auto-Scooter to run on with the acquired momentum.

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The Auto-Scooter is made in Three Styles, as follows, and is sent complete, safely packed and carriage paid.

MODEL 1.—Varnished finish **22/6**

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Stocked by all leading Stores, Cycle and Toy Dealers.

Send your order to-day to

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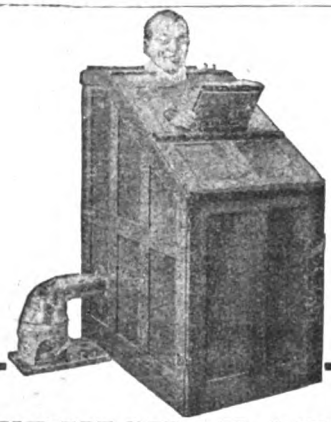
Sole Manufacturers, Patentees & Owners of the Patents. Works: Chestergate, Stockport.



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If you want your kitchen utensils to LAST 10 20, or 40 years, buy them of CAST IRON. They will prove good cookers, quick boilers, are easily kept clean, and will give almost everlasting wear. Don't be put off with short-lived enamelled steel or tin ware. Insist on CAST IRON. Made to wear, not to wear out.

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The Cotton Fabric with the Serge Finish.

Light grounds with a multitude of stripes in various designs in pink, blue, helio, grey, black, green, etc.; navy or black grounds with pin striped effects, or in pretty plain shades of the latest colourings.

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Self-Propelling and Adjustable WHEEL CHAIRS.

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By simply pressing a button the occupant can instantly change the position of the Back to any degree of inclination. The Extensible Leg Rests can also be adjusted by the occupant and are supplied either single or divided. No other wheeled chair has so many conveniences.

Catalogue F3 of Wheel Chairs Free.

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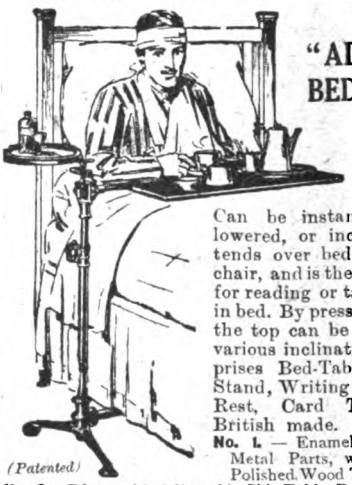
THE "ADAPTA" BED-TABLE



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Can be instantly raised, lowered, or inclined. Extends over bed, couch, or chair, and is the ideal Table for reading or taking meals in bed. By pressing a button the top can be adjusted to various inclinations. Comprises Bed-Table, Reading Stand, Writing Table, Bed Rest, Card Table, etc. British made.

No. 1. — Enamelled Metal Parts, with Polished Wood Top **£1 10 6**

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No. 5.—Complete as No. 3, but with Detachable Candle Sconce, and all Metal Parts finished Polished Brass **£4 4 0**

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YOU begin to look old, with those grey and faded hairs, always so conspicuous. A bottle of the world-famed

Lockyer's Hair Restorer, 1/9

gives health to the Hair and restores the natural colour. It cleanses the scalp; is the most perfect Hair Dressing.

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I offer a genuine guaranteed Remedy for tobacco or snuff habit. It is mild, pleasant, strengthening. For either sex. **Overcome that peculiar nervousness and craving for cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, or snuff. It is unsafe and torturing** to attempt to rid yourself of tobacco or snuff habit by suddenly stopping by will power; don't do it. The correct method is to **eliminate the nicotine poison** from the system, strengthen the weakened, irritated membranes and nerves, and genuinely overcome the craving. You can give up tobacco and enjoy yourself a thousand times better, while feeling always in robust health. My FREE book tells about the **wonderful three days' method.** Legions of testimonials. Inexpensive, reliable. Full particulars, including my **Book on Tobacco and Snuff Habit,** and all Circulars, sent in plain wrappers, FREE on request. Write to-day to **EDWARD J. WOODS, Ltd., 10, Norfolk Street (Dept. 353 T.A.L.), London, W.C.2.**

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It will be sent FREE ON REQUEST.

Address: Misses ALLEN-BROWN, F.R.H.S., Violet Nurseries, Henfield, SUSSEX.

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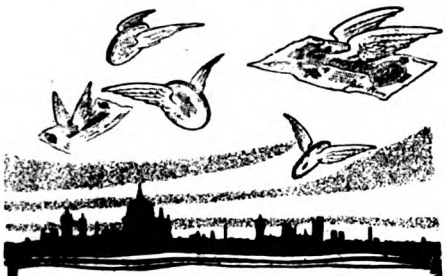
The School Scourge. Nits and vermin in the hair are the commonest means of communicating disease. Rankin's Head Ointment kills them instantly. 3d., 6d., & 1/- of all Chemists.

Try "RANKO" INSECT POWDER for Fleas, Beetles, and all insect pests. 3d., 6d., & 1/- tins.

Rankin & Co., Kilmarnock.

Established over 100 years.



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These lamps start saving money for users the moment they are installed.

There is no "just between" in the cost of electric lighting.

You are either burning current at the tremendous rate of the old type of wasteful lamps—or you are saving in the wonderful MAZDA way.

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A toilet preparation for rendering the hands soft and white. Delightfully perfumed with the essence of the Violet. A few drops rubbed well into the hands after washing makes them beautiful.

Sold by all Chemists and Stores,
1/3, 2/6, 5/- *per bottle.*

Wholesale:
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"I must apologise for being late. Both laces broke and not another in the house."
Hostess: "Why don't you ask always for **Hurculaces?**"

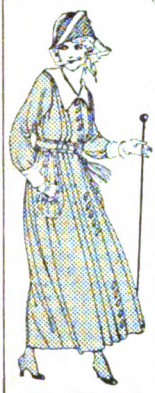
Hurculaces
GUARANTEED BRITISH MAKE

HURCULACES are the ideal Laces for BOOTS and SHOES

Infinitely superior to the unbranded laces—chiefly German—so thoughtlessly purchased in the past. HURCULACES never "let you down"—they do not become dingy nor lose their tags. Always smart, neat, and comfortable.

Stocked by high-class Drapers, Outfitters, and Bootmakers.

Wood Bros Maternity Wear
SELF-ADJUSTING



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The Model illustrated is distinctly appropriate for Maternity Wear, neat, smart, and comfortable. Comes in variety of materials and colours from **50/-**. Skirts from **12/11**.

When ordering, state length, back and front, ordinary waist and hip measurements, also **present measurements.**

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WOOD BROS., Maternity Specialists,
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Of all Stationers, or from
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10 YEARS' WEAR!

Jute Soles last longer than any others. Easiest for House, Shop, Factory, Travel, Hospital, etc. D. F., Reading: "Last pair nearly 10 years in use." W. BYGRAVE, New Barnet: "Got last pair 9 years ago; now quite worn." M. H. (address on request): "15 years ago I purchased a pair—after fairly regular wear in Africa they are still serviceable." Prices (*Post free United Kingdom, abroad extra*).
State size and length of Walking Shoe. Colour—Brown, Black, or White.

	Children's.	Ladies'.	Gents'.
A. Plain Shoes (without Strapping)	2/3	2/5	2/6
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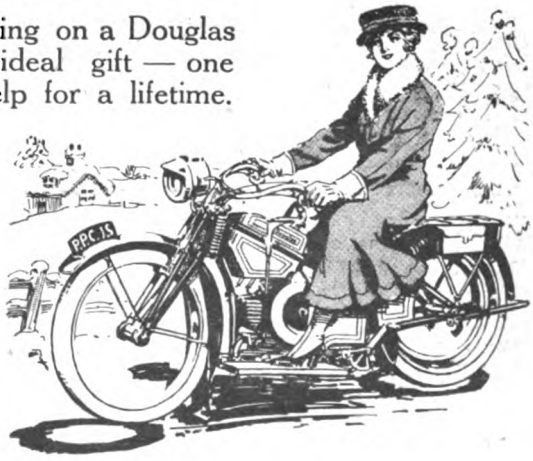

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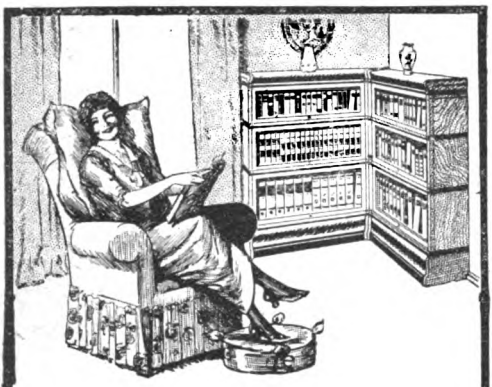

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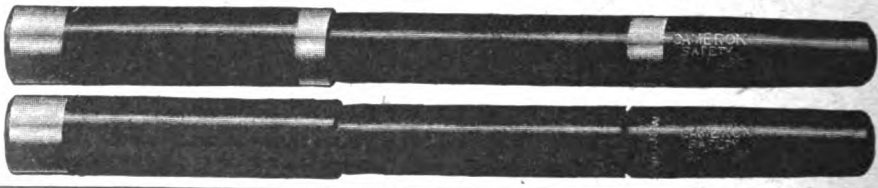

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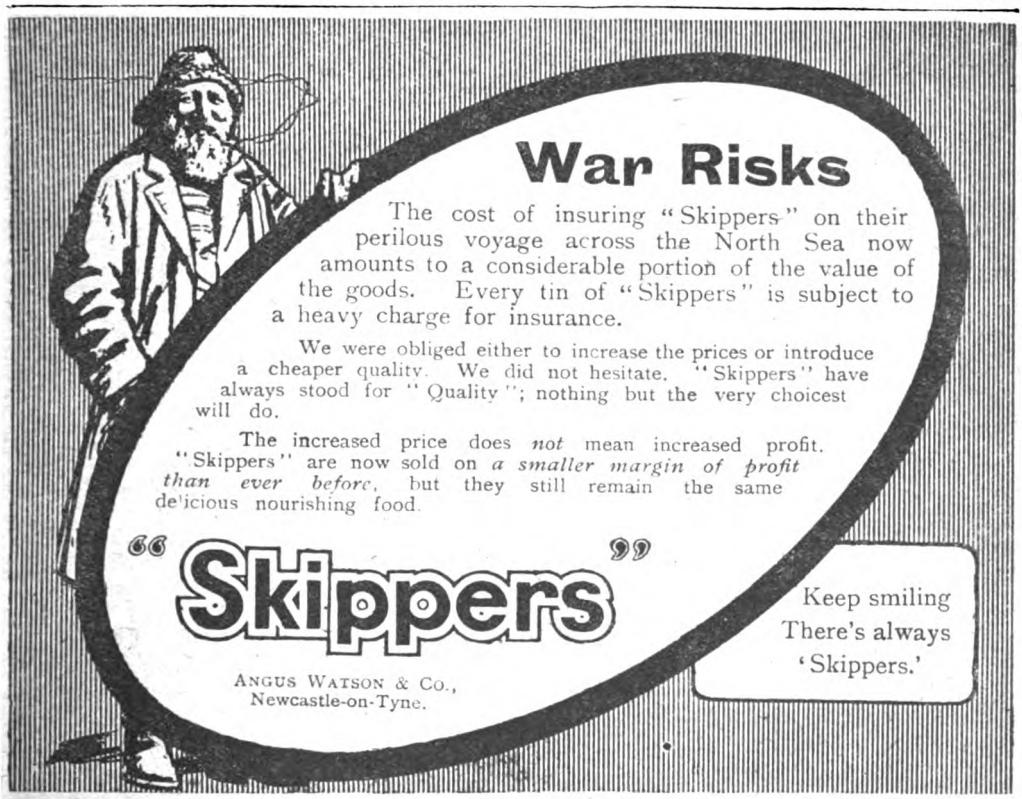

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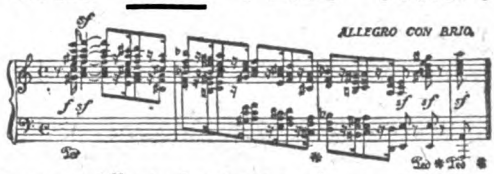

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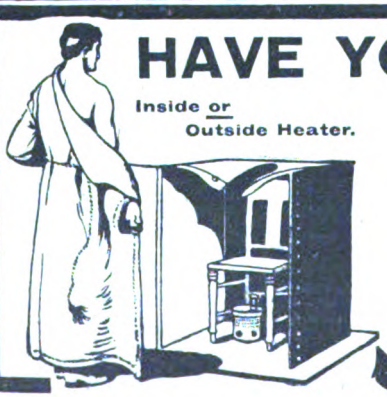

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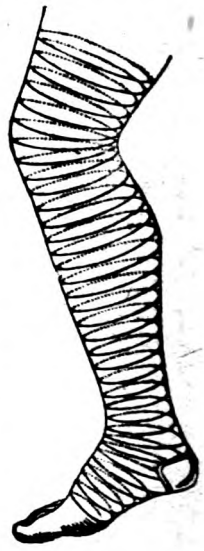

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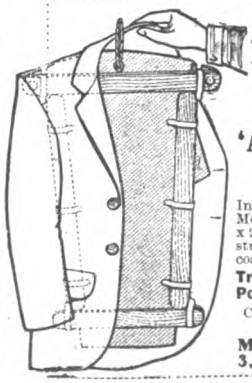

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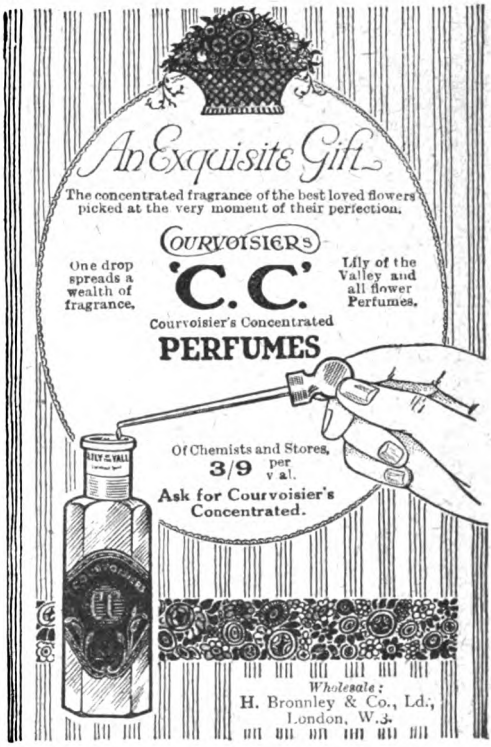

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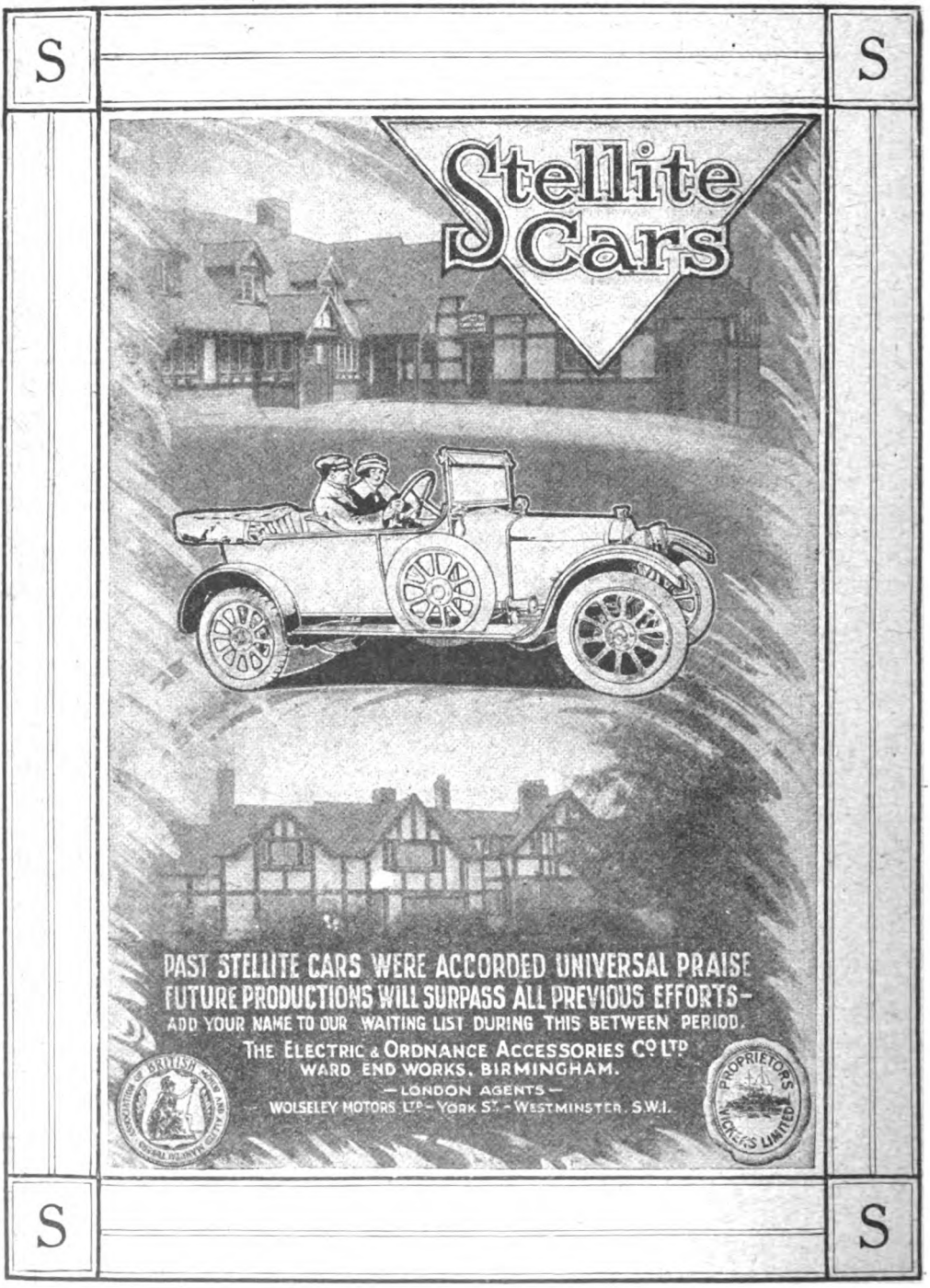
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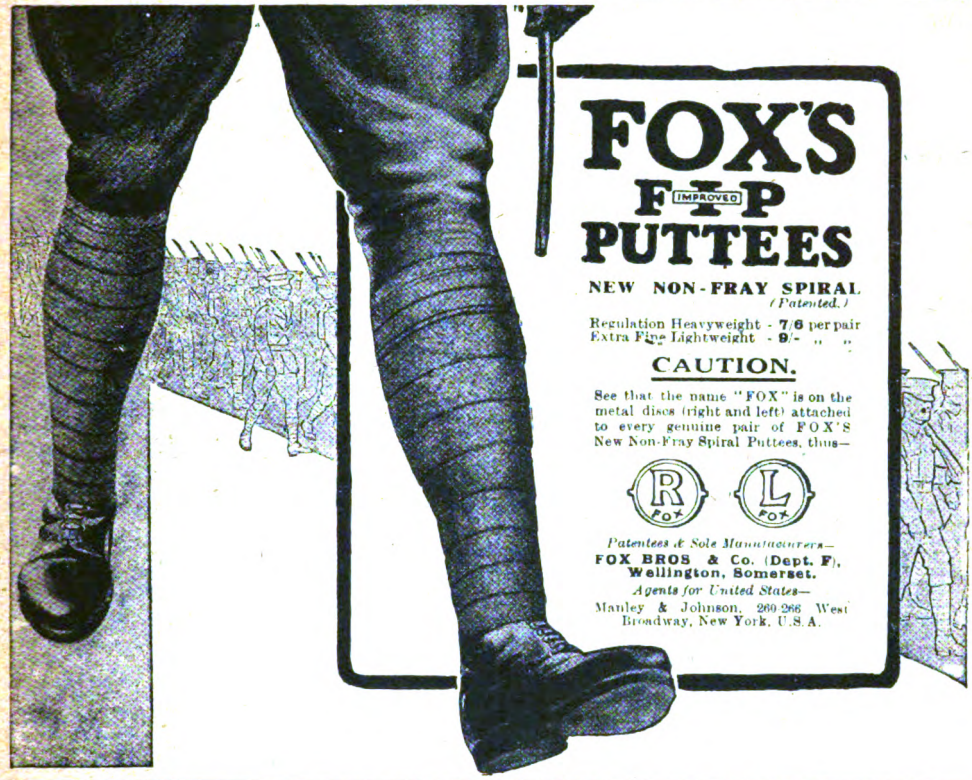

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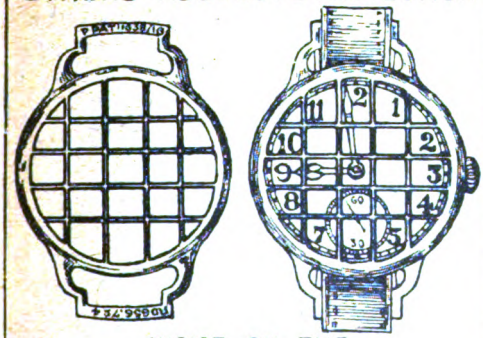

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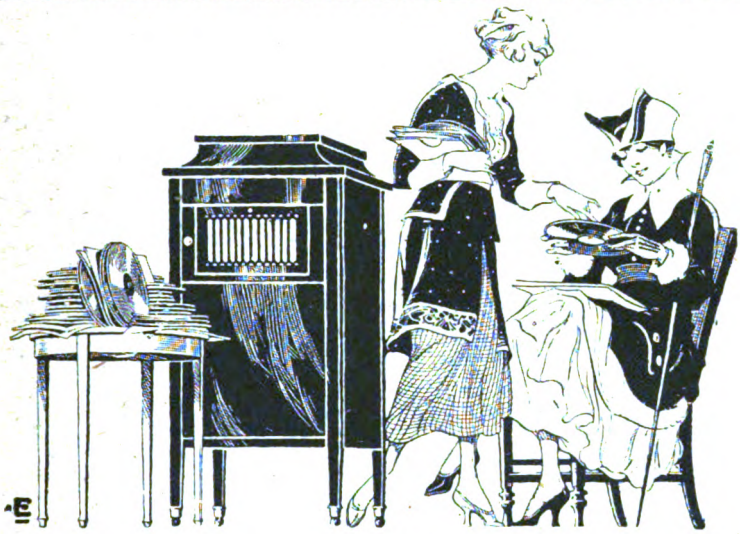

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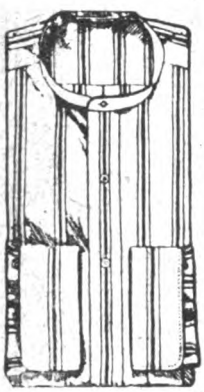

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The Natural Ease Corset Style 2.

7/11 pair.

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Complete with Special Detachable Suspenders.

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No bones or steels to drag, hurt, or break.
No lacing at the back.
Made of strong, durable drill of finest quality, with special suspenders, detachable for washing purposes.
It is laced at the sides with elastic cord to expand freely when breathing.
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It has a short (9 inch) busk in front which ensures a perfect shape, and is fastened at the top and bottom with non-rusting Hooks and Eyes.
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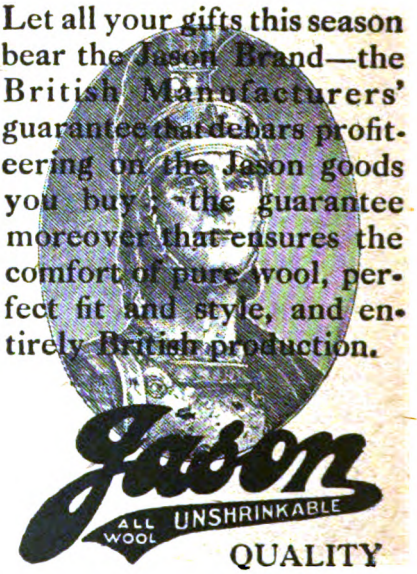
Let all your gifts this season bear the Jason Brand—the British Manufacturers' guarantee that debars profiteering on the Jason goods you buy; the guarantee moreover that ensures the comfort of pure wool, perfect fit and style, and entirely British production.



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If Cross, Feverish, Constipated, Bilious, and the Stomach out of Order, give "California Syrup of Figs."

A laxative to-day saves a bilious child to-morrow. Children simply will not take the time from play to empty their bowels, which become clogged up with waste; then the liver grows sluggish, and the stomach is disordered.

Look at the tongue, mother! If coated or the child is listless, cross, feverish, with tainted breath, restless, doesn't eat heartily, or has a cold, sore throat, or any other children's ailment, give a teaspoonful of "California Syrup of Figs," then don't worry, because it is a perfectly harmless dose, and in a few hours all this constipation poison, sour bile and fermenting waste matter will gently move out of the bowels, and you will have a healthy, playful child again. A thorough "inside cleansing" is ofttimes all that is necessary. It should be the first treatment given in any sickness.

Ask your chemist for a bottle of "California Syrup of Figs," which has full directions for babies, children of all ages, and for grown-ups plainly printed on the bottle. Look carefully and see that it is made by the "California Fig Syrup Company." All leading chemists sell "California Syrup of Figs" at 1/3 and 2/- per bottle. Refuse substitutes.

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Rheumatism is "pain only." Not one case in fifty requires internal treatment. Stop drugging! Rub soothing, penetrating "St. Jacobs Oil" directly into painful, stiff joints and muscles and relief comes instantly. "St. Jacobs Oil" is a harmless cure for rheumatism which never disappoints and cannot burn the skin.

Do not grumble and go on suffering. Get a small bottle of "St. Jacobs Oil" from your chemist, and in just the moment you use it you will be free from rheumatic pain, soreness, stiffness and swelling.

"St. Jacobs Oil" has cured millions of sufferers from rheumatism in the last half century, and is just as good for sciatica, neuralgia, lumbago, backache and sprains.

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"Danderine" makes hair thick, glossy and wavy.

Removes all dandruff, stops itching scalp and falling hair.

To be possessed of a head of heavy, beautiful hair, soft, lustrous, fluffy, wavy and free from dandruff, is merely a matter of using a little Danderine.

It is easy and inexpensive to have nice, soft hair and lots of it. Just get a shilling bottle of Knowlton's Danderine now—apply a little as directed, and within ten minutes there will be an appearance of abundance, freshness, fluffiness and an incomparable gloss and lustre, and try as you will you cannot find a trace of dandruff or falling hair; but your real surprise will be after about two weeks' use, when you will see new hair—fine and downy at first—yes—but really new hair—sprouting out all over your scalp. Danderine is, we believe, the only sure hair grower, destroyer of dandruff and cure for itchy scalp, and it never fails to stop falling hair at once. All chemists sell and recommend Danderine, 1/1½ and 2/3 a bottle.

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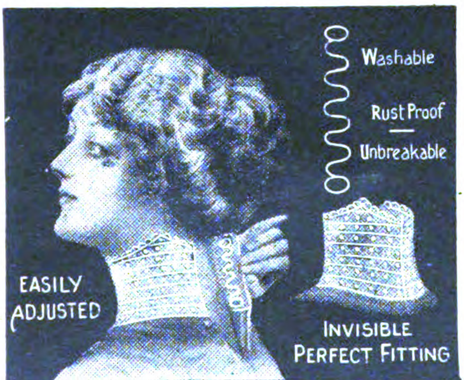

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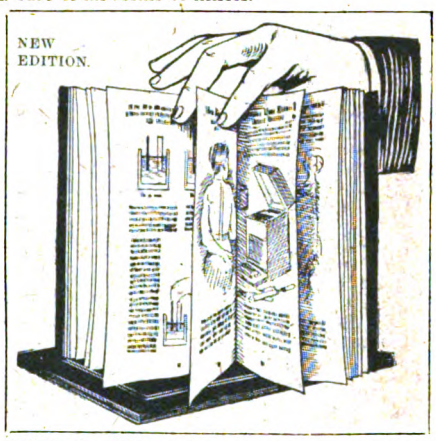

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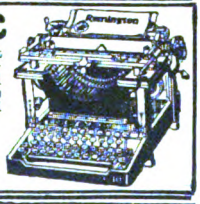

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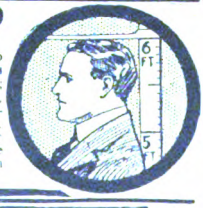

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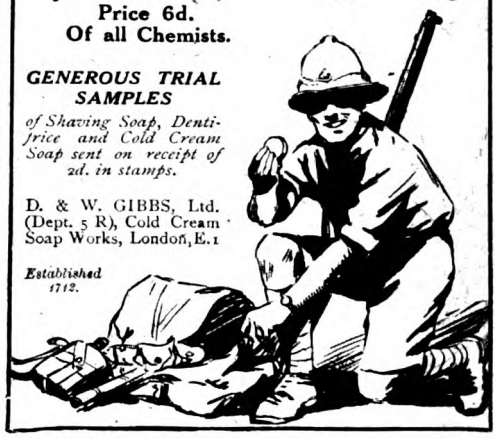

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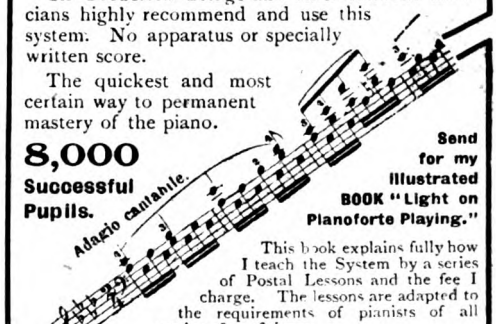

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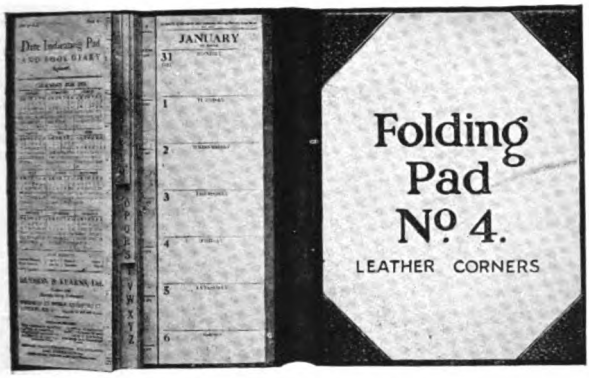

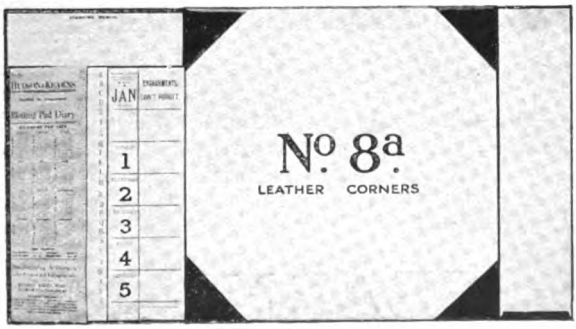

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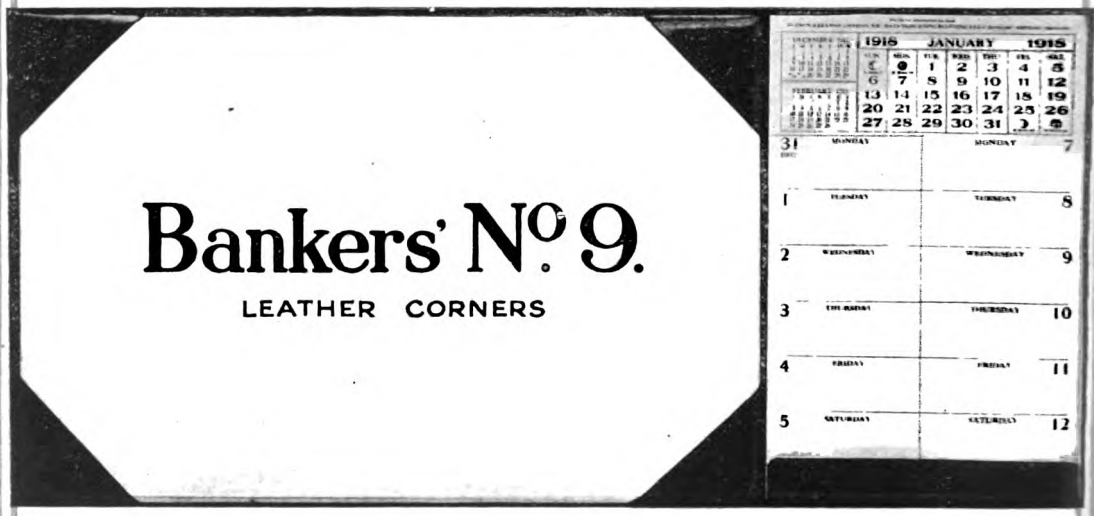

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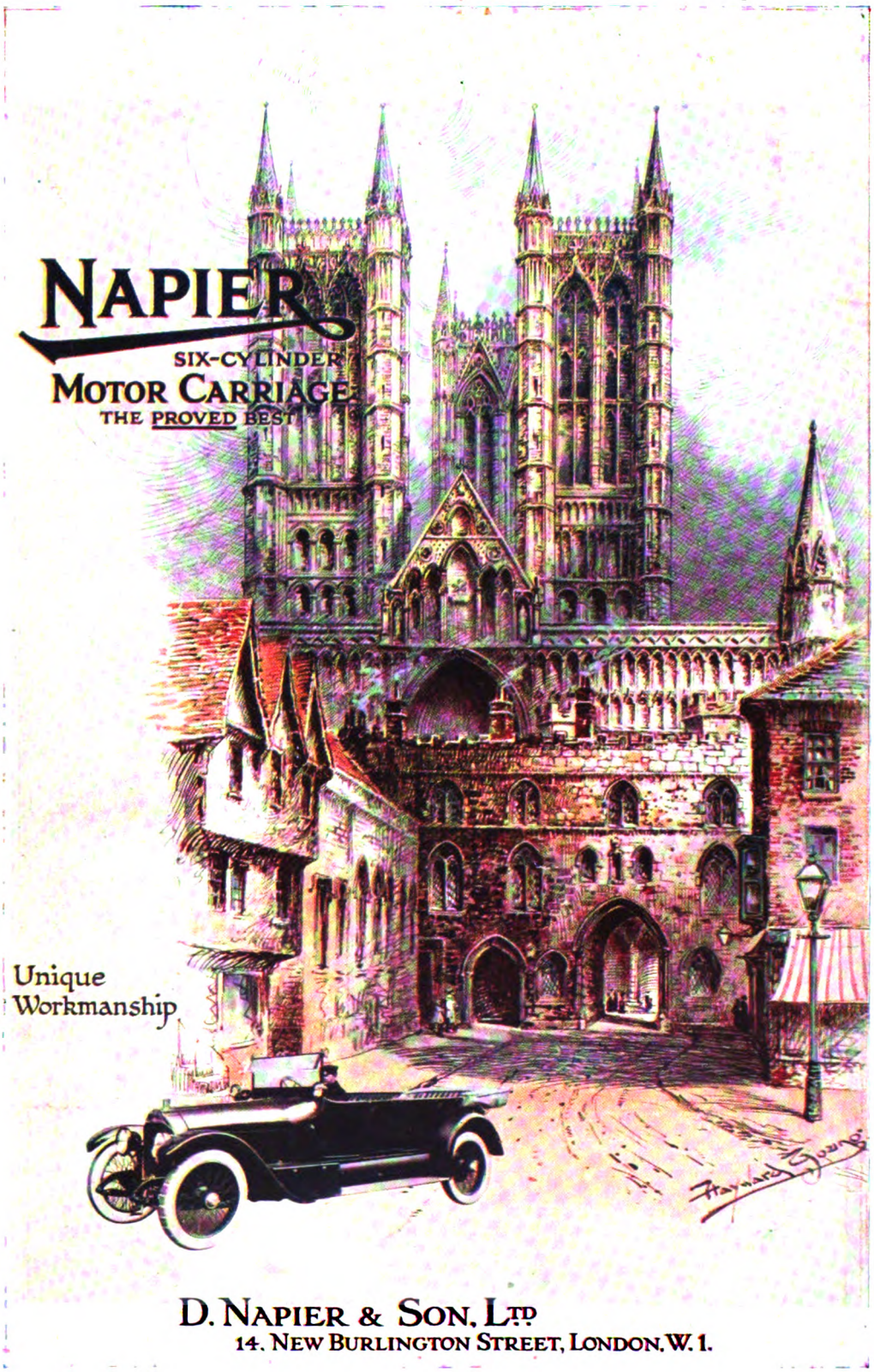

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